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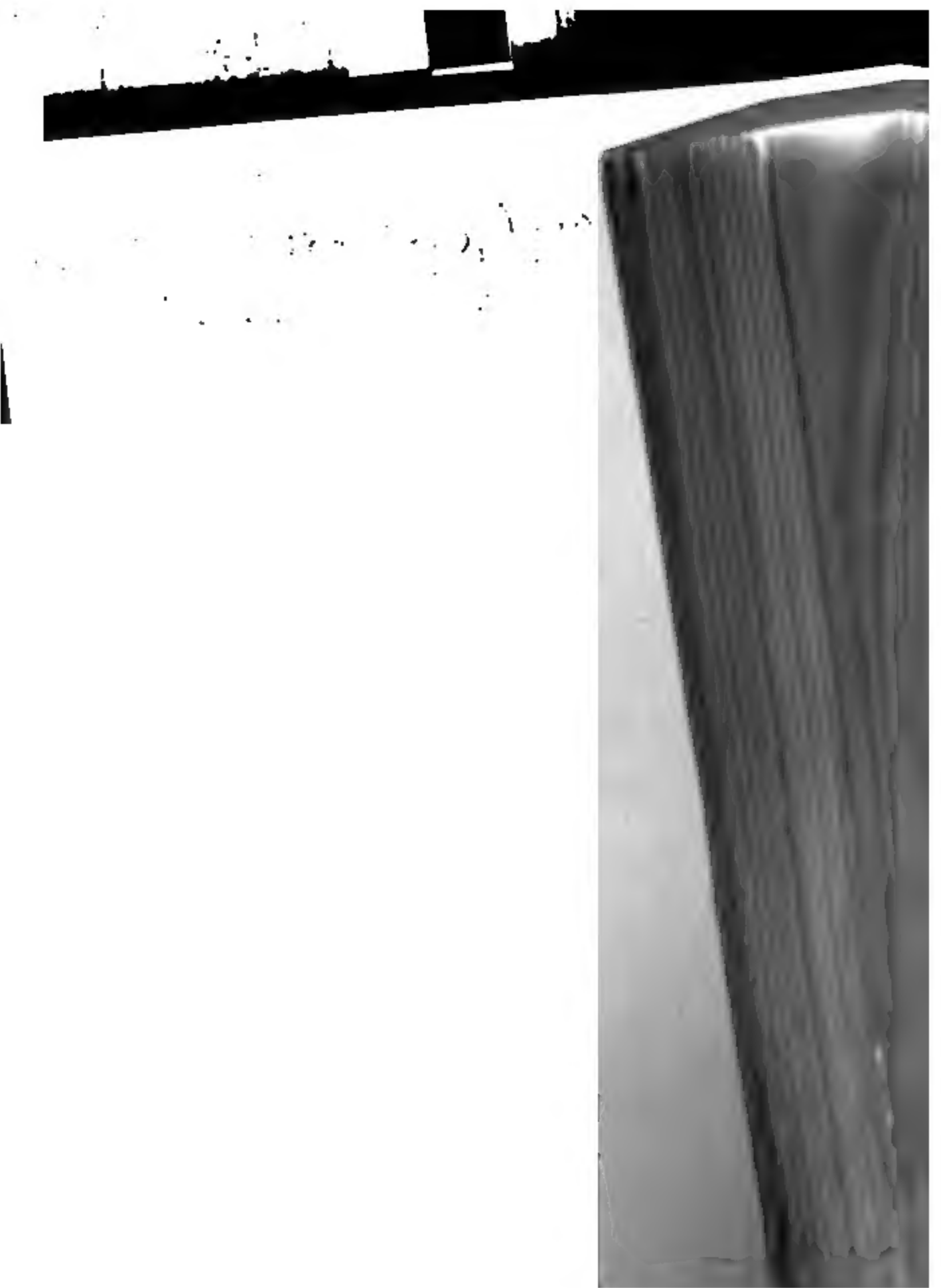
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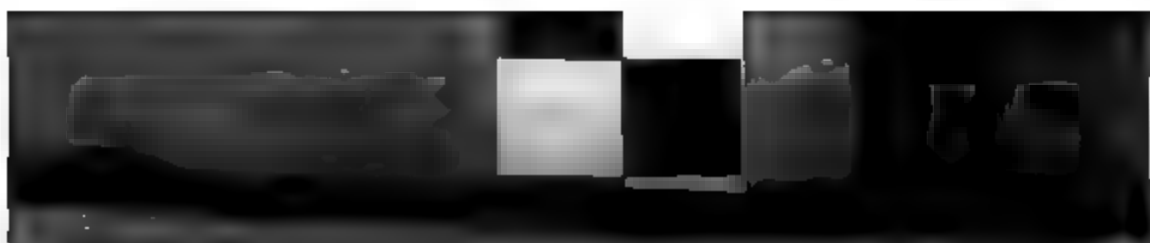


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ERROMANGA

THE MARTYR ISLE



# ERROMANGA

## THE MARTYR ISLE

BY THE REV.  
H. A. ROBERTSON  
ERROMANGA

EDITED BY  
JOHN FRASER, B.A., LL.D.

SYDNEY, AUTHOR OF "THE ETRUSCANS; WERE THEY CELTS?" ETC.

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## EDITOR'S PREFACE

My share in this work is a small one. Many of his friends both here and in Canada had frequently asked Mr. Robertson to write a history of Erromanga, but the daily oversight of his numerous flock and other mission work on the island leave him little time for literary composition ; and thus the project was again and again deferred. At last I offered, if he would write the narrative, to do all that might be needed in the way of making arrangements for publication. And so the manuscript was commenced, and the chapters, one by one as they were completed, passed into my hands. This book is now presented to the reader as a record of nearly thirty years' trial and perseverance in a small and remote portion of the field of missions.

In the text I found several passages that required explanation ; for, however easy it is for those who are familiar with the islands and their customs to understand what is meant as soon as the thing is named, yet readers in distant lands may fail to catch the full meaning unless some

words are thrown in for the sake of clearness. For that purpose, I have occasionally altered the text a little, and wherever something more was needed I have added notes ; some words and expressions also have been changed throughout the chapters. With these exceptions the narrative now stands as I received it.

The author has had much difficulty in getting information about Erromanga as it was previously to the year 1872, and especially about the martyred Gordons. If any friends in Canada or elsewhere possess letters from them, he would be glad to have these, to be used in a second edition of this book, if it should be required. Also he would be much obliged if any persons in the Australian States can give him further particulars about the sandal-wood trade and the early condition of Erromanga.

The illustrations are taken from photographs made by the author himself and one or two others ; and the maps of Erromanga and of part of Oceania were prepared for this volume by two of his friends as love-gifts.

Those who take an interest in natural history will value the appendix on the *flora* and the physical aspect of the New Hebrides, which Dr. Alexander Morrison has kindly written for this volume. It is founded on a personal visit to Erromanga and the New Hebrides.

## EDITOR'S PREFACE

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I have cheerfully given my assistance in preparing this volume in the hope that, along with the Rev. Dr. John G. Paton's *Autobiography*, it may help to show how much untold heroism there often is in the conduct of Christian missions, and how much the missionary is the pioneer of civilisation and trade.

JOHN FRASER.

MAITLAND, NEW SOUTH WALES.



## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

FROM the time we visited Canada in 1883 until about four years ago, when I consented to undertake to write this work, many of my friends in Britain, Canada, the United States and Australasia had urged me to tell *the Story of Erromanga*. Feeling my missionary duties on so large an island almost overwhelming for one man, I could not see how I was to find time for this additional labour. But when I was told by friends, in whose wisdom and strong practical common sense and sound judgment I had every confidence, that it was a duty I owed to the Churches which maintain our mission on the New Hebrides, and to the Christian world at large, and that I ought to set to at once, for life was uncertain, and that my intimate knowledge of Erromanga and its people clearly pointed to me as the man who should write the narrative : when, I say, it was put to me as a *duty*, I at once resolved to *make* time and give every spare moment to this heavy undertaking.

I have tried throughout to make my narrative a record of facts, without which it would be utterly

useless as history and at the same time unsatisfactory to the general reader, but especially so to friends of missions, who are ever anxious to have tidings regarding the progress of God's work in all lands.

I also experienced great difficulty in gathering information about the early history of Erromanga, and especially so about the sandal-wood trade, and in fact about almost everything connected with the island before my time. With two or three exceptions, I got no help from the many persons to whom I had thus written. To friends who kindly lent books and to those who replied, giving what information they could, I am most grateful.

My special thanks are due to Mr. J. W. Lindt, of Melbourne; Mr. Thomas Pratt, agent of the L.M.S. at Sydney; Rev. Dr. Gunn, of Aneityum, and Rev. J. H. Lawrie, of Sydney—for supplying some of the photographs which illustrate this volume. Dr. A. Morrison, Government Botanist of Western Australia, has also obliged me by writing a general account of the physical features of the New Hebrides for the Appendix.

Those who may review or criticise my book—and it is a poor book that is *not* criticised—will, I am sure, be fair, and will take into consideration the great difficulty I have had in preparing a work of this kind.

I should have liked to write much more fully

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

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than I have done about the manners and customs and characteristics of the natives of the island, but I was urged to push on with the work as there were signs of impatience for its appearance, and so I have been led to make my narration of later events somewhat brief. And now I have done my part. Whether I have succeeded or not, the public must judge. It has claimed much time, much toil, but these have been cheerfully given.

H. A. ROBERTSON.

ERROMANGA, NEW HEBRIDES,  
*31st March, 1902.*





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## CHAPTER I.

### THE ISLANDS OF THE GROUP.

ERROMANGA is one of the larger islands of the group to which the great English navigator of the eighteenth century gave the name of the *New Hebrides*. He observed that, in their position on the other side of the globe, they correspond with the *Old Hebrides*; for they are about as far west of the meridian circle of Greenwich in the Southern Seas as the Hebrides are in the map of Britain; and, like them, this group forms a chain running nearly north and south, with the largest islands at the top. The most southerly of all is the small island of Aneityum; to the north-west of that is Tanna, with its ever-active volcano, and almost an equal distance to the north-west of Tanna is ERROMANGA. Not far to the east of Tanna are two small islands, Futúna and Aniwa, with a people mostly of brown Polynesian descent. To the north-west of Erromanga is Efaté or Faté, its native name, but called Sandwich Island by its discoverer. The population of this island is mixed with a strain of brown Polynesians which is specially noticeable at Fila Harbour on the west coast. With the exceptions just named, all the islands of the New Hebrides are occupied by Melanesians, that is, by black men who are ultimately of the same race as the Fijians, the Papuans of New Guinea, and, with these, the Australians. Although the people of the New Hebrides are all of the same origin,



yet it is evident that two separate streams of immigrants must have come there at a very remote period ; for the population of the three southern islands—Erromanga, Tanna and Aneityum—differs materially from that of the islands to the north of Efaté ; the men are much fiercer on the southern islands ; the women here wear long petticoats of leaves, while the men go about almost without clothing ; whereas, in the north, it is quite the reverse in the matter of dress. On the southern islands the canoes are small and rudely made from trunks of trees, fit to hold three or four men ; but on Malekúla, in the north, there are huge war canoes carrying fifty men. On Malekúla also there is something like the Indian law of caste, but more akin to an artificial grading of society, through initiation ceremonies, such as prevails in the islands to the north of the New Hebrides. But there is nothing of that kind on Erromanga or Tanna or Aneityum. On the last of these three, there is only one language, for the island is small, but on each of the other two there are several. The larger islands to the north have a multitude of languages also—which seems to be everywhere a heritage of the race of Ham—but the islands in the middle of the group have the same language with slight varieties of dialect. Besides these, there are many other reasons which would lead one to believe that the people of the three southern islands are the pure descendants of the earliest occupants of the whole group, just as the Tasmanians are probably the representatives of the first population of Australia, driven southwards by those who came in at a later time. The northern New Hebrides would thus be a mingling of their first inhabitants with a later people of the same race who came to join them there ; to this mixture the middle islands, Efaté, Nguna, Mae and Tongoa, also belong, but these seem to have got, at some time,

a considerable infusion from the brown Polynesian stock.

There are in all the group about thirty inhabited islands, varying greatly in size. The largest, which is also the most northerly, is Santo; it is not yet fully known to us, but it is said to be seventy miles in length and forty in breadth. St. Philip's Bay, on the north coast, is very large and extensive, having a shore line of about sixty miles. Captain Cook described it as "of unfathomable depth, except near the shores, which are for the most part low". The north-east point he named Cape Quiros after its first discoverer, and the north-west point he called Cape Cumberland. The port of Vera Cruz is at the head of this bay, and near by is the river Jordan. On the west and in the interior, the land rises to a height of two or three thousand feet. Santo Peak, in the south, is 5,520 ft. above the sea level. The estimated population of the island is 12,000.

Malekúla, to the south-east, is next in size, being seventy miles in length by twenty-five in breadth. The narrowest breadth is about six miles. The highest elevation is Mount Penot, 2,925 ft., in the centre of the island. Here there are no large rivers, but several streams of fair size. This island possesses some good harbours and bays, especially a fine land-locked bay called Port Sandwich on the south-east. Port Stanley on the north-east is also well sheltered. The estimated population of Malekúla is from 15,000 to 20,000.

Aurora and Pentecost are, both of them, islands of considerable size, as are also Ambrim, Epi and Efaté. Ambrim has a circumference of sixty miles; its highest peak is that of its volcano in the centre of the island, and is about 3,500 ft. in height. Early visitors to Ambrim seem to have been struck with its beauty and fertility. It is in the midst of a "sea of islands," and that lends

to it a decided charm. Here is an extract from Dr. W. Wyatt Gill's Journal of 1862: "On 30th October, we were off Ambrim, gazing at its magnificent volcano. The ocean was as smooth as a lagoon, and well it might be, for on every side we saw large and lofty islands rising out of the sea. How utterly insignificant many of the islands of Eastern Polynesia appear in comparison with such as these!"

Epi is from twenty-five to thirty miles in length, and has a breadth of twelve miles. Its highest peak is about 2,700 ft. above sea level. There are no rivers here. Its estimated population is 2,600, and Paama and Lopevi—two small islands lying to the north of Epi—are said to have 2,000 inhabitants.

The circumference of Efaté, or Sandwich Island as it is often called, is close on seventy-five miles. This island possesses two of the finest harbours in the group, called Fila (or Vila) Harbour and Havannah Harbour. Fila is the commercial centre of the New Hebrides, and numbers of English and French settlers reside at this port. Havannah Harbour, some miles to the north of Fila, is a large and very deep sheet of water. It was visited in 1849 by Captain (now Vice-Admiral) Erskine in H.M.S. *Havannah*, and named by him after his ship.

Malo, or St. Bartholomew's Isle, to the south of Santo, is thirty-two miles in circumference, and its greatest height is 1,280 ft. The estimated population is 1,000.

The island of Erromanga, whose northernmost point is at least sixty miles from the south coast of Efaté, lies between  $18^{\circ} 35'$  and  $19^{\circ}$  south latitude, and in east longitude between  $168^{\circ} 55'$  and  $169^{\circ} 16'$ . Its greatest length is about thirty-five miles, and its greatest breadth twenty-five miles. Traitor's Head, its loftiest elevation, is 2,700 ft.

Tanna, lying to the south of it, has a circumference

of about forty-five miles, its greatest length being eighteen miles. Its chief peak, Mount Merren, is between 4,000 and 5,000 ft. high. The soil on Tanna is extremely fertile, and, besides its active volcano, it has numerous hot springs rising up along the shores.

Aneityum, the most southerly island, has a length of eleven miles and a breadth of eight. Its greatest height is 2,788 ft., and its present population is 527.

Futúna has an area of four square miles, its length and breadth being about equal. The population at last census was 320.

Aníwa, lying to the north-east of Tanna, is ten miles in circumference. Its present population is 160.

Tongoa, the largest of the Shepherd Isles, which are in the centre of the group between Epi and Efaté has a circumference of eight miles, and rises to a height of 1,800 ft.

Nguna, close to the north side of Efaté, is six miles in length and four in breadth.

Numerous small though fertile islands lie like dots everywhere, especially in the centre and northern parts of the group. The panorama of these fair islets, many of which can be seen together from one spot, forms a glorious sight.

The New Hebrides Islands make a link in the great volcanic chain of the Pacific which stretches along the western coasts of North and South America, takes in the Aleutian Islands and Japan, thence south to the Philippine group, New Guinea and the Solomon Isles, from that group to the New Hebrides, and on to New Zealand.

There are now in these islands three active volcanoes—those of Ambrim, Lopevi and Tanna. In 1897, a submarine volcano broke out near the north coast of

Tongoa at a place marked on the charts as Laika Bank, which is about a mile and a half from the mainland. It had great force at first, and for a time the eruptions were very frequent; its power, however, soon decreased considerably. A submarine volcano also showed itself twenty years ago between Traitor's Head, Erromanga, and a small island some miles from the coast; it has been dormant ever since. Here the only evidence that there was any eruption is now the sudden shoaling at that particular spot, all the water around being very deep.

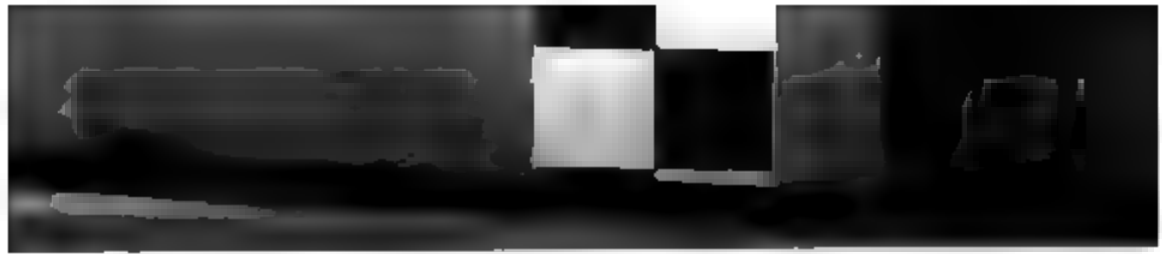
In March, 1902, the young volcano at Tongoa was again eruptive, right in the midst of the sea, at a point farther to the south-east.

In 1894, a violent eruption took place on Ambrim. It did a vast amount of damage, and even yet one can plainly see the track that the burning lava took on its way to the coast; and when it poured into the open sea an enormous column of smoke and water, several hundred feet in height, was forced up into the air.

Lopevi Island is a volcanic cone, rising to the height of 5,000 ft. The eruption of 3rd June, 1898, threatened at first to have very serious effects. This volcano had been dormant for nearly a quarter of a century, but then, on that day, with terrific roars, it sent up huge volumes of dust and lava. The dust was carried in the air to a great distance, even as far as to Erromanga, one hundred and forty miles away, where we got it about eight o'clock on the Friday evening of that week. Then the wind, which had been strong all day, increased to a gale here, and suddenly there came with the gale a thick shower of volcanic dust, which we thought to blow from Tanna, close by, though we had never known it do so before. In a few minutes it completely covered the floors of every room in our house, every table and

shelf. It penetrated through the joinings of the closely fitting corrugated iron roof; through windows, doors and every possible cranny. Books, dishes, and drawers containing clothes and other things, were all lined with a covering of fine dark-brown dust. In attempting to look outside, we could not bear the onset of the sharp, annoying, sand-like ashes which filled our eyes, and we were glad to get into the house again. By nine o'clock, our coral walks were *black* instead of white, and this novel rain continued to fall till midnight. What a state our house was in! The dust was so fine that it seemed to sift through everything, and it was many days till we got quite clear of it. We soon heard that Lopevi, and not Tanna, was responsible for the trouble. On Tongoa, about forty miles to the south of it, the dust fell all the afternoon; the air was black with it, and the natives were terror-stricken. Mr. Smaill, the missionary of North Epi and its surrounding islets, told us that the Lopevi movement had "gradually subsided and become fairly quiet, though signs of activity are seldom long absent".

The crater of the Tanna volcano is not more than 600 ft. above the level of the sea. It is one of the finest in the Pacific, is always active, and is one of the sights, or perhaps *the sight*, of these islands. The late Rev. Dr. Steel, of Sydney, spoke of it as the "great lighthouse of the southern isles, which every three or four minutes bursts forth with greater brilliancy, like a revolving light". I have had a good many opportunities of visiting it—about six or seven times in all; each time it wore a different aspect; it is always grand and awe-inspiring, and can never become "an old affair". On one occasion I remember seeing the molten lava thrown up to a great height in the air and playing around like a magnificent fountain.



Like the other southern islands, Erromanga has not as yet been thoroughly surveyed, but after my many journeys round the coast, by sea and land, I estimate, by as correct means as lies in my power, that the circumference of the island is about 100 miles. I notice that my predecessor, the Rev. James D. Gordon, who made careful notes of distances from point to point, gave 104 miles as the result of his calculations. The distance of the island from Sydney, N. S. Wales, is as follows:—"By Great Circle track (from Darling Harbour in Sydney) to a position off the Isle of Pines and thence to Dillon's Bay, Erromanga, is 1,325 nautical miles".

Erromanga's rugged coast-line contains numbers of large caves which were often, in the dark days of heathenism, used for shelter by people who had been vanquished in war and were escaping from their pursuers. These great caverns were sometimes strongly fortified, and, entrenched in them, the wretched fugitives would drag out weary weeks of existence, managing to keep themselves alive by eating wild roots and leaves, which could only be searched for under the cover of night.

Erromanga has no harbours, but in several of its bays good anchorage is to be found. Dillon's Bay, opening to the north-west, is the chief. It is, and has been for over forty years, the principal mission station on the island; for well-nigh seventy years it was the great sandal-wood port, and also, alas! the scene of many a ghastly tragedy. Elizabeth Bay is about ten miles north of Dillon's Bay. Portinia Bay and Cook's Bay are on the east side, the former opening to the north-east, the latter directly east.

The mountains, especially in the interior, where they are not visible from the coast, rise to a considerable

height—those nearer the sea being, as a rule, not more than 1,000 ft. above its level. The large Sovu Range stretches across the northern part of the island, another range, with the peaks of Ungin, Uvetumungkum and Ulongkisiori, lying in the south. These two chains of mountains are very distinctly noticed by navigators on approaching the island, and can be seen from a great distance, though their highest peaks are not more than 2,400 ft.

In the Ifwa district, on the very south of Erromanga, there is a high mountain called by the natives Itetewinom, "the extinguished fire," because, in the past, whenever they went off to visit Aniwa, a fire was kindled on the summit of that mountain as a signal to the Aniwans of the visit; they, in turn, lit a fire on the highest peak of their island, which was put out when the visitors arrived safely in their canoes. The same signalling took place when they returned or when Aniwans proposed to visit Erromanga. Should some mishap occur to cause delay in arrival, the fires were kept burning for days and even weeks, until, when there was no hope for the missing canoes, the fires were tossed down the sides of the mountain and thus "extinguished"; hence the name.

The peak of Nilpon-u-moap rises near Cook's Bay, in the east of Erromanga; the name of the place means 'red clay' (*nilpon*, 'place,' *moap*, 'red clay'). From this mountain great quantities of the clay were dug, the people using it largely at their heathen feasts, when they smeared their faces and bodies in all the available colours of the rainbow. The Tannese and Aniwans bought large supplies of "moap," taking it away in their canoes and giving the Erromangans pigs, white shells (which were greatly valued), and other articles in exchange.

As far as I can gather from the natives, they had at



one time no special name for the whole of this island, though it was divided into numerous distinctive districts. A tradition is that, many years ago, a *fan-lō*, or great chief, called his people round him, and said: "Let us name our land; we know it only as a mountain of many divisions and many names. Let the whole country that embraces the districts of Numpun<sup>1</sup>-Norowo, Ra-Loves and Numpun<sup>1</sup>-Neraipau be called 'Uviliau'; while the land that faces the setting sun will bear from this time the name of Ilungos." His word was accepted, and the whole island was then known by the two names—Uviliau, the eastern, and Ilungos, the western shire. The latter contains three divisions—Il-Efaté, in the north and facing the island of Efaté; Lo-itnateman,<sup>2</sup> in the west; and, south of that, the large and populous district of Unepang.

The name "Erromanga" came from the Tannese, who had supplied Captain Cook with the names of all the southern islands, and since that time only have our people known their own island under that designation. The word, therefore, has no special meaning to them, and cannot be regarded as belonging to their language.

There is a very marked difference between the physical appearance of the east and west sections of the island. The former is more like the other islands of the group, the mountains and large level tracts of land being covered with dense vegetation right down to the water's edge, and the soil being extremely fertile. On the west are to be seen thousands of acres of open country, affording splendid pasturage, and a grand chain of hills, some of them rising to a height of over 2,000 ft. and stretching as far as the eye can reach. The soil on this side is,

<sup>1</sup> Throughout this volume, the 'superior' numbers refer to the notes farther on, which are arranged to correspond with the chapters.

however, very poor, for cocoanuts and other fruits can scarcely grow, but it has many advantages in other respects.

The island is well watered; for numerous streams, having their source in the inland mountain ranges, join larger streams and rivers, and flow through miles of valleys on their way to the open sea. The largest are Williams's River, flowing into Dillon's Bay; Cook's River, which empties itself into the bay of the same name; and South River—a beautiful stream which winds through the great Unepang district, gliding like a silver serpent between the heights of the Umpanyampong mountains. Cook's River is the largest and most navigable of the three, and boats can proceed upwards several miles from its mouth. By this route the traders were able, many years ago, to carry great loads of sandal-wood from the forests to the bay.

Williams's River rises in the Tourè Hills, about twelve miles inland to the east of Dillon's Bay, and flows through many fair valleys between great grass-covered mountains, in some places with a gliding, silent, tortuous motion, in others bounding over huge crags and boulders. With a roaring, seething sound, as it rushes white and glistening over its rocky bed, it forms the "rapids" at Umpon-soli and Undam, and there enters the great gorge of Dillon's Bay. Here the land presents a peculiar and striking appearance, as if torn asunder by a mighty force; for hills and enormous rocks arise abruptly from either side of the water.

Williams's River is not navigable for more than a mile from the bay; its waters are clear and good, and ships are able at all times to get a plentiful supply. It is remarkable that, on so comparatively small an island, this river should attain such great force in times of heavy rain. At such periods it increases in size prodigiously,

and, as it flows red and muddy through the valley, it covers tracts of land which are ordinarily dry. Then nothing can withstand its force; great trees, rocks, boulders, and even houses are caught in its mad torrent and literally *rushed* down to the mouth of the river, where the sea in its turn meets this mass of débris and banks it up on the shores of the bay.

The beaches of Dillon's Bay are covered with gravel, great stones and boulders of trap rock, all worn smooth and round with the constant action of the water. A rocky spot indeed this is, but withal a charming spot, with its grassy slopes and rolling hills, its dark, and yet, at times, glistening river, shadowed by the overhanging branches of great banyans and waving palms; here are the rustic thatched houses of the natives, surrounded by groves of lemon and orange trees, laden to the ground with their yellow fruits, shrubs and plants of every size, crotons and dracænas in all their gorgeous colourings, and towering above all are fine old trees over whose gnarled and knotted branches climbs the sturdy cactus, spreading itself from bough to bough and forming a network of green and clinging tendrils. In the distance are seen the brown and rugged "steppes" of the southern point of the bay, while beyond all and far away to the west stretch the great blue ocean waves, grand in their peaceful calm, and grander still when the whistling storm-winds lash them into foaming billows and they roll, white and feather-crested, across the bay, booming in their fury and dashing their silver spray against the rocky pillars and up the sides of the gloomy caverns that guard the coast.

In some places the scenery is very fine, and in travelling across the island many splendid views are to be had. Rev. George N. Gordon, writing of one of his inland tours, says: "On the morning of the 29th (May, 1858),

taking with me two teachers and two natives, we ascended the mountains of Dillon's Bay by torch-light. About midday, we had the pleasure of seeing from the top of a mountain the blue ocean to the east and the eastern side of Erromanga, which appeared in Tahitian grandeur. We continued to pursue our journey along the native paths, which led through splendid forests containing large trees, and over living streams, whose murmuring waters, with the solitary lays of the feathered tribe, reminded us of life even in this land where death still reigns. Never before had I seen such charming scenery as here presented itself to view, on the right hand and on the left, as we journeyed towards Portinia Bay. In some places, on the narrow ridges of mountains, we walked beside natural galleries, whence, looking down, we beheld on either hand gorgeous valleys decorated most tastefully by the Creator's hand. I felt then that I had something more to admire than when walking through the magnificent galleries of the Crystal Palace. By sunset we reached Portinia Bay, around which the country presented the same rich and fertile aspect. Here a lofty mountain, visible from the west side of the island, stands in Tahitian majesty and grandeur between Portinia and Cook's Bays. It is locked in by the land, though at a distance it appears detached."

Erromanga was visited for the first time by foreigners in the year 1774, when Captain Cook sailed in his ship, the *Resolution*, through the entire group of islands which he named the New Hebrides. Proceeding southwards from Santo and passing all the northern and central islands, on the 27th of July a new land was sighted—that of Erromanga, some of its high ranges of hills being distinctly seen in the distance. Later on, these were found to belong to one large island, but, owing to ad-

verse winds, three days passed ere the ship drew near the north-west coast. Cook entered a small bay (probably Elizabeth Bay), intending to anchor, but, the wind being again changeable, he kept to the south, passing Dillon's Bay, and at sunset the southernmost end of the island was reached.

His purpose was to leave Erromanga and press on to the southern islands, but at eight o'clock at night a bright light, which proved to be the Tanna volcano, was seen ahead. Cook, thinking it unsafe to draw near it at night, stood off the Erromangan coast until day-break. A day later, the ship was off a high headland on the south-east, and he tried to land on a small islet near it, in order to procure firewood; but the attempt was unsuccessful, owing to the heavy surf on the shore. This small island, which is now marked on the charts as High Rocky Island and is uninhabited, is formed by two hills. It is very inaccessible. Twenty-one years ago, during a visit of the *Dayspring*, the chief officer and I managed, after much difficulty, to effect a landing. Besides the boat's crew, several Erromangans were with us. As we neared the rocks, one of them, with a line in his hand, jumped ashore, the boat being at once pushed off to avoid being dashed to pieces. In this way, by watching our chance and springing on the rocks as we drew near them, several of us landed, and by the aid of another line five goats were sent ashore. These have now increased to a large flock, and seem to be thriving well. The island is very fertile, for we noticed coconuts, bread-fruit and other trees growing plentifully. The rocky shores were swarming with huge shell-fish—a dainty of which the natives are extremely fond, and in searching for which they will spend hours. They were able to get a plentiful supply that day, and, on

returning to the ship, regaled themselves right royally on their shelly repast.

But to return to Captain Cook's visit. The *Resolution* anchored about half a mile from the shore on the mainland, and it was noticed that some of the people made efforts to swim off to the ships, which seemed to indicate that they were not hostile. Cook's own words will best describe the events of the following day, and will show how treacherous these seemingly friendly people proved.

"On the 4th (August) at daybreak," he says, "I went with two boats to examine the coast, to look for a proper landing place, wood and water. At this time the natives began to assemble on the shore, and by signs invited us to land. I went first to a small beach, which is towards the head, where I found no good landing, on account of some rocks which everywhere lined the coast." [A very rocky part of the bay is called by the natives *Nilpon-nevat*, 'the place of rocks'.] "I, however, put the boat's bow to the shore, and gave cloth, medals, etc., to some people who were there. For this treatment they offered to haul the boats over the breakers to the sandy beach, which I thought a friendly offer, but had reason afterwards to alter my opinion. When they found I would not do as they desired, they made signs for us to go down into the bay, which we accordingly did, and they ran along shore abreast of us, their number increasing prodigiously.

"I put into the shore in two or three places, but not liking the situation, did not land. By this time, I believe, the natives conceived what I wanted, as they directed me round a rocky point, where, on a fine sandy beach, I stepped out of the boat without wetting a foot, in the face of a *vast* multitude, with only a green branch in my hand, which I had before got from one of them.

I took but one man out of the boat with me, and ordered the other boat to lie-to a little distance off.

"They received me with great courtesy and politeness, and would retire back from the boat on my making the least motion with my hand. A man, whom I took to be a chief, seeing this, made them form a semicircle round the boat's bow, and beat such as attempted to break through this order. This man I loaded with presents, giving likewise to others, and asked by signs for fresh water, in hopes of seeing where they got it. The chief immediately sent a man for some, who ran to a house, and presently returned with a little in a bamboo;<sup>3</sup> so that I gained but little information by this. I next asked, by the same means, for something to eat; and they as readily brought me a yam and some cocoanuts. In short, I was charmed with their behaviour;<sup>4</sup> and the only thing that could give the least suspicion was that most of them were armed with clubs, spears, darts, and bows and arrows. For this reason I kept my eye continually on the chief, and watched his looks as well as his actions. He made many signs to me to haul the boat upon the shore, and at last slipped into the crowd, where I observed him speak to several people and then return to me, repeating signs to haul the boat up and hesitating a good deal before he would receive some spike-nails which I then offered him. This made me suspect that something was intended, and immediately I stepped into the boat, telling them by signs that I should soon return.

"But they were not for parting so soon, and now attempted by force what they could not obtain by gentler means. The gang-board happened, unluckily, to be laid out for me to come into the boat. I say unluckily; for if it had not been out, and if the crew had been a little quicker in getting the boat off, the natives

might not have had time to put their design in execution, nor would the following disagreeable scene have happened. As we were putting off the boat, they laid hold of the gang-board and unhooked it off the boat's stern, but as they did not take it away, I thought this had been done by accident, and ordered the boat in again to take it up. Then they themselves hooked it over the boat's stern, and attempted to haul her ashore; others, at the same time, snatched the oars out of the people's hands.

"On my pointing a musket at them, they, in some measure, desisted, but returned in an instant, seemingly determined to haul the boat ashore. At the head of this party was the chief; the others, who could not come at the boat, stood behind with darts, stones, and bows and arrows in hand, ready to support them. Signs and threats having no effect, our own safety became the only consideration; and yet I was unwilling to fire on the multitude, and resolved to make the chief alone fall a victim to his own treachery; but my musket at this critical moment missed fire. Whatever idea they might have formed of the arms we held in our hands, they must now have looked upon them as childish weapons, and began to let us see how much better theirs were, by throwing stones and darts, and by shooting arrows. This made it absolutely necessary for one to give orders to fire. The first discharge threw them into confusion; but a second was hardly sufficient to drive them off the beach; and, after all, they continued to throw stones from behind the bushes, and every now and again to pop out and throw a dart. Four lay, to all appearance, dead on the shore, but two of them afterwards crawled into the bushes.

"Happy it was for these people that not half our muskets would go off, otherwise many more would have fallen. We had one man wounded in the cheek



with a dart, the point of which was as thick as my finger, and yet it entered about two inches, which shows that it must have come with great force, though indeed we were very near them. An arrow struck Mr. Gilbert's naked breast, who was about thirty yards off, but possibly it had struck something before, for it hardly penetrated the skin. The arrows were pointed with hard wood."

When Cook returned to his ship, several people were noticed on the shore, holding up two of the oars which had been taken from the sailors during the skirmish, and it was thought by the commander that this was "a sign of submission". He was, however, induced to fire a four-pound shot, which so startled them that they fled from the shore, leaving the oars behind them, and not a single person appeared again.

The tale of this first appearance of strangers has been handed down to the children and children's children of the people who saw Cook on that occasion. About twenty years ago, I heard from an aged man, named Potnilo-lo-intomo, a full account of the visit, and I was glad to note that it tallied exactly with Cook's own description, though the old man had never heard the latter. He told me that, when he was a boy, he listened to the tales of the grey-bearded men around him, who recounted, probably as they sat round their glowing camp-fires at night, and waxed eloquent over the warlike feats of their youth, of the great white *nobu* or gods, who came to their land long ago, and who struck terror into the hearts of the people by their wonderful fire and the huge floating *lo* or kingdom in which they lived. Potnilo said that one man only—Narom, the chief—was killed outright by the whites, the other natives who were wounded soon recovered. Amongst a few striking little incidents in connection with the

havoc wrought by the strangers, I heard of a woman who was gathering food in her plantation and who had *a finger shot clean off by a cannon ball!*

The bay in which Cook anchored, and to which he gave no name, is now marked on the chart as Polenia Bay, although we have always known it as Portinia Bay. I am convinced, however, that neither of these names has been supplied by the natives, but that they are both corruptions from Potnuma, the name of a district on the north side of the bay, where Mr. Gordon had his mission settlement. In the same way, our own mission station in that bay, almost at the spot of Cook's landing, is called by us Port Nariven, instead of Potnariven, the real name, which is formed from *pot*, 'the place of,' and *nariven*, 'sand'.

A large and very deep bay to the south of this was passed by Cook after leaving Portinia Bay, and is now known as "Cook's Bay". "The high headland between these two bays," he says, "I named 'Traitor's Head,' from the treacherous behaviour of its inhabitants." This headland, which comprises three peaks, is seen distinctly from a long distance. It is densely wooded, and its summits are continually enveloped in mist. Lieut. Rowley, R.N., of H.M.S. *Wallaroo*, has kindly supplied the heights of the three peaks; the first or outer peak is 2,160 ft., the second, 2,580 ft., and the third and most inland peak, 2,700 ft.

I have twice climbed the highest peak. We could follow the native paths for some distance from the base, but after a time these ceased and our road had to be made as we continued our ascent. In some places we had to pull ourselves up by the roots of trees, in others, scale a rock at the side of a precipice, where a false step or a slip would have hurled us into the valley below. As

we neared the summit, we sank knee-deep in moss and ferns.

Some years ago, when making our first ascent, we found the air bitterly cold on reaching the summit. It was rather a novel experience in this warm climate to be crouching, shivering, on a damp, moss-covered log, trying to warm ourselves by the glow of the fire which the natives had kindled. On a fine day, from the summit of Traitor's Head, the islands of Tanna and Aniwa can be distinctly seen, and on a very clear day even Efaté, which is about sixty miles distant.

#### LINES IN PRAISE OF ERROMANGA.

*(Written by a young girl who was born there.)*

A rock-bound isle in a southern sea,  
With a southern sky for a dome,  
And its lonely hills and darkening vales,  
Is the land I call my home.  
It has grassy slopes and deep ravines,  
Where the birds of the wild are dwelling,  
Where nought, but the sound of the echoes, round  
The craggy rocks is swelling.

From afar up among the distant hills  
Comes the murmur of a stream—  
A slumber sound and a slumber song,  
That fills the vale like a dream ;  
A wild hawk swoops from the 'echo-rock,'  
Then soars to the mists on high ;  
All else is still save the rippling rill,  
And the willow's moaning sigh.

When the cloud of night is spreading o'er  
That vale, from its depths to its crest,  
And the whispering winds, as they float along,  
Hush the cooling birds to rest ;  
When the rugged heads of the far-off peaks  
Are hid in a shrouding veil,  
And high in the night the pale moonlight  
Sheds its rays o'er hill and dale—

## THE ISLANDS OF THE GROUP

21

'Tis *then* that the isle, in splendour wrapt,  
Draws my wondering eyes to the scene ;  
For then the foot of the shadowed hills  
Is bathed in a golden sheen ;  
And the moonbeams touch with a silver wand  
The river dark and lone,  
And they cheer men's way with their gleaming ray,  
While they kiss e'en the mossy stone ;

They glint on the leaves of the swaying palm,  
That bends to every breeze ;  
And pierce the web of the cactus that climbs  
Up the fine old knotted trees.  
And all is fair—so grand, so fair !  
For the wondrous Evening Star  
Looks down on the brook, each silent nook,  
And the vales 'mid the hills afar.

Loved Star of mine ! thou heavenly light !  
Watch o'er my island home,  
And shed thy blissful beacon rays  
On the land and the ocean's foam.  
O lonely hills, O rocky peaks !  
My home in the New Hebrides ;  
Should the storm-wind sweep o'er the rolling deep,  
My mind *in thee* is at ease.

Let our home be in the ice-bound North,  
Or an isle of the Southern Sea,  
The love is the same : some love the North,  
But the Star of the South for me.  
Roll on, ye waves, in your angry roar,  
Roll on, in your sunny calm,  
As a girdling band round my own home land,  
My isle of the southern palm !

N. R.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE TRADE IN SANDAL-WOOD.

THOUGH the existence of sandal-wood on Erromanga was not much known until 1839, the year of Williams's martyrdom, a small trade in it must have been carried on for some time previously. The Erromangans tell of 'yellow men,' probably natives of Rotumah,<sup>1</sup> who settled among them long before the white men came. The yellow and the black seem to have been constantly at war with each other, and the people at Dillon's Bay say that, after much bloodshed, the yellow men fled across the mountains to the great "Worantop" (Traitor's Head) on the east of the island.

One of the early navigators in these seas, the Chevalier Dillon, passed through the Fiji and New Hebrides groups, searching for sandal-wood, and our bay on the west coast of Erromanga received his name.

During my visit to Sydney, in 1878, Rev. Dr. Steel<sup>2</sup> one day said to me, "You must try and see Dr. George Bennett whilst here; he is much interested in Erromanga, and wants to tell you of his early visits to the island". I had often heard of him as an enthusiastic naturalist, and now welcomed the pleasure of meeting him. He gave me graphic descriptions of his two visits to Erromanga—the first in 1829, the second some years later. It was Dr. Bennett who was the first to capture a living nautilus, a creature which is still found in the

waters of Dillon's Bay. In his work entitled *Gatherings of a Naturalist in Australasia* (p. 377), he says, that after passing Erronan, now called Futuna, "on the following day the island of Erromanga was visible; its aspect was mountainous, covered with dense vegetation, and, as we sailed along its coasts, displayed bold, picturesque scenery, clothed in the luxuriant vegetation of the tropics. We anchored in Dillon's Bay, at a distance of half a mile from the shore. . . . The declivities of the hills in the vicinity were densely wooded, whilst on the ledges small villages could be distinguished, shaded by bread-fruit, banana and cocoanut trees, and an expanse of hilly country formed a picturesque and verdant background to this beautiful scenery. . . . A long coral reef extended from the land, which was partially dry at low water; about this reef I thought I might fall in with and capture a nautilus on the rocks. On the 24th August, 1829, when walking on the deck of the ship, in this bay, on a calm evening, I observed an object floating upon the water resembling a dead tortoise-shell cat. So unexpected a sight excited my curiosity, and the boat, which was alongside the ship at the time, was immediately manned and sent to ascertain the nature of this floating object. It was found to be the pearly nautilus, the keel of the shell uppermost; it was captured and brought on board. When the boat approached, the animal was sinking; but, the shell being broken by blows with the boat-hook, its escape was prevented. How vividly the bright moment recurs to my remembrance, when this long-sought-for prize was quivering within my grasp! I extracted the animal (after making a sketch of its relative position) in a perfect state, and found it firmly attached to each side of the upper cavity of the shell, which was unfortunately shattered to pieces: the chambered parts were perfect, and on laying them

open, they only contained water; but this may have occurred from injury sustained when the animal was captured. Thus, after the lapse of nearly a century, the animal of the pearly nautilus was recovered to science.

"Not having a jar or a bottle of sufficient diameter, I contented myself by preserving that which was the great desideratum—the animal itself. Its natural position is with the back of the head and concavity of the hood against the chambered portion of the shell, the funnel resting on the outer concave lip, the tentacles protruded over the side margins of the aperture, and the body retained within the shell by the mantle and its horny girdle. This animal is so constructed as to move with rapidity at the bottom of the ocean, carrying its shell like a snail, and having the power of rising and occasionally floating upon the surface. On being brought on board, I observed it retract the tentacles or feelers still closer than before; and this, with a slight quivering of the body, was the only sign of vitality it gave. How efficiently this animal has been made available to science is well known to those who have seen the valuable memoir of the *nautilus pompilius* by my friend Professor Owen, published by the Royal College of Surgeons of England."

On Dr. Bennett's second visit to Erromanga, the ship cast anchor off Traitor's Head, and "we were surprised," he remarked, "on going ashore, to find a band of Rotumah natives there, and with them two or three little boys and a tiny girl, sitting round a fire and with great glee roasting some bread-fruit." "What is the meaning of this?" the Doctor asked the men; "these children do not belong to you"; and then he heard this tragic tale.

These Rotumah men had been on the island for some time, trading in sandal-wood. Quite lately, the people of that district had come to them, telling them that there was going to be war between them and the tribes beyond the "great mountain". They asked the foreigners to accompany them to battle, and give their help. "No; we are not here to fight your wars; we will not go," they replied. "Well, give us your guns," the Erromangans answered; "you can spare them, and they will make our fighting easier". But to this request too the strangers turned a deaf ear. "We will not give our guns; go and fight your own battles and leave us; we are not your people but strangers."

Seeing that urging was useless, the Erromangans sprang to their feet in great anger. "Let it be so," they yelled; "you will get no more sandal-wood from us, and from this time, you are not only strangers but foes." The enraged people started at once for the distant camp, put to flight the tribes beyond the "great mountain," killing and wounding many, and returning in horrid exultation with six helpless little ones as prisoners. They must have been the children of chiefs, for the victors were jubilant over their misery and kept them carefully guarded. Oh, the dreadful deed that followed! That night two of these poor little victims were dragged brutally from their companions, savagely killed, and then eaten by their ferocious captors. The pitiful screams of the helpless children, as they writhed in the clutch of their murderers, were heartrending, and, though, alas! too late to save them, the Rotumah men dashed out, and after a deadly fight succeeded in rescuing the remaining little ones and carrying them to their camp.

Life was no longer safe for any of the strangers on the island, and they implored Dr. Bennett's people to take them to their home again. The Captain agreed, and



soon all the band left the shores of Erromanga. They reached Rotumah, and the fugitives with the children they had saved from so terrible a doom were landed. Shortly before the ship was to leave, they came on board again to say good-bye to their friends, and, when it was time for them to return to the shore, Alau, the little girl, pleaded to stay a short time longer to play with her companion on board—the ship's monkey. Soon after the natives had left, a strong wind got up, and, in fear of being driven ashore, the Captain had at once to set sail and leave the coast. "What can I do about this poor little Alau?" queried Dr. Bennett, under whose special care the child had been placed. "You may take her to England, Doctor," the Captain replied; and added, that was the only thing left to do.

So Alau, the tiny Erromangan, had a long voyage to England's shores and to the only home she was ever to know. At first she could not be led to eat any food on board but potatoes—the nearest in appearance to her native yam; water was her only drink; bread and meat she would not even look at. In a little, the child learned to like the hard ship-biscuits and, in time, other foods too. A little stranger, she was amongst strangers, but she soon learned to trust them, and was wonderfully happy in her own way. To her only playmate, the mischievous monkey, the child became very much attached, and the two enjoyed many a romp together, Alau sharing all her food with her frisky companion.

Dr. Bennett's little *protégée* was a great attraction at drawing-room gatherings in the home country, and it was touching, he said, to see the small, delicate child moving so confidently from one lady to another and speaking in her quaint broken English of an island far away. Noticing how the food was prepared, "We don't

cook things like that in my land," she would say; "we dig big holes in the ground and put fire and stones in them, and the stones cook our food when we require it". On she would go with her prattle, her great, dark, rolling eyes glancing from one to another of the kind faces that met her view, until some one would ask what food they ate; surely not yams always; did her people never eat anything else? Then the child, with a shudder, would draw closer to her friend, a startled look in her wonderful eyes, the piteous, frightened little face showing all too plainly that scenes, awful in their hideous cruelty, had imprinted themselves upon her memory, never to be effaced.

Men of science in London examined the child's head, which they pronounced remarkably well formed and the brain quite up to the average. But always delicate, her lungs became affected by the cold English climate, and, during her second winter at home, little Alau, the fugitive from her own native shores and rescued there from an awful death, closed her short but eventful life.

The Erromangans for generations used the sandal-wood as they would any other for fuel, and had no idea of its value until foreigners came and asked for it. The only price that was at first given was a small bit of hoop-iron, from three to four inches in length, and this for a great boat-load of wood. But the savages were greatly taken with the iron, for by sharpening it on a stone and fastening it to a piece of wood they made themselves rough axes. Before that, they had nothing but their ancient implements of stone to work with.

Netai—the great chief Netai of Cook's Bay—used to delight to tell me of the olden times on Erromanga, and how tedious was the method of cutting trees for their houses and canoes. Every tree had to be burned

at its base, and, when that was done, there still remained the slow work of hacking with stone axes to sever it from the stump.

"Sometimes," Netai said, "a man would climb up a very high tree, and just as he was driving his *utevil* or 'axe' against a limb, the stone would loosen and fall out. Now the man had just got up the tree with some labour, and he did not care to get down again. So he would call and call again till some one heard, or perhaps he might have friends near. 'Uvrangi, find for me my *utevil*; it has fallen;' and he would point to the spot. But, perhaps, though they might search for some time, they could not see it."

"Then he would have to go down himself?" I said.

"Oh, no! he wouldn't, for that would be wasting his time; he would show the handle of his *utevil*; 'Look, you fellows,' he would say, 'and see where I drop this;' and, sure enough, they would find the stone in that very spot. Then, after detaching a long creeper from the tree and lowering it to his friends, who tied the *utevil* to it, the man pulled it up, and went on with his work again."

Such was the early Erromangan method of hewing wood; and the sandal-wood, too, had to be cut in the same way. The ships carried great lengths of hoop-iron, bound together, and, amidst the babble of voices from swarms of naked, painted savages clamouring for their pay, and the confusion and shoutings that arose as the huge logs were swung into place, there could be heard in the distance the clink of a hammer as it struck the anvil: the iron was being cut into the coveted lengths.

Sometimes a bit was shown to the natives as soon as the ship came to anchor, and off they would go, often away up the steep mountain sides, searching for the treasure. After the logs were burnt and cut down, they

were tied together and carried to the bay on men's shoulders; if a very big tree, it had to be dragged down the rocky mountain tracks. How they must have shouted! For natives believe in making plenty of noise, especially when carrying anything heavy in that way. Very often, when they brought the sandal-wood, the white men refused to give the hoop-iron till another boat-load was secured, threatening to sink their canoes if they did not "clear out" at once. "And some of them," Netai said, "would tell us to come off to the ship in the evening and they would pay us, and when we went off, they would tell us to go farther than we wished."

A few of the rough characters once told the natives how much they would like to learn the Erromangan language, so that they might talk to the people and be friendly. "You come on board and teach us, and we will teach you English." They gave the natives tobacco, and, note-book in hand, proceeded to the lesson. Of course, the whole conversation was carried on in "sandal-wood English," but the white men said they could supply the correct English phrases. The sailors soon learned a few simple Erromangan sentences, such as: "Are you in good health?" "How much will you give me?" and "When are you coming back again?" and the English equivalents, in the form of sailors' oaths, were duly impressed on the listening Erromangans.

"But in this way," added Netai, who soon found out the real meanings, "we learnt to talk to them in their own language when they deceived us, as they often did. 'We have a great *navilah*,<sup>3</sup> "sacred stone," on board,' they would tell us; 'you bring us plenty of wood, and you may have it.' And as we prized the *navilah*, especially very old and large ones, we did as they asked, and when we found that their *navilah* was only a stone that they

had cut themselves and that had never been formed by the spirits, we were angry—and *talked to them as they had taught us to talk.*"

Not until many years had passed did the natives receive the small English axes now used as payment for trade.

In connection with the early sandal-wood days much has taken place on this island that will never be known. We get glimpses here and there of dark deeds, cruelties that fill us with loathing for the low, unprincipled white men—savages themselves—who had dealings with these degraded but ignorant natives. As the late James Gordon wrote: "Every beach on this ill-fated island has been stained with the blood of foreigners, and the sandal-wood itself has been taken away besmeared with native blood." Some of the awful tragedies that have taken place on these shores would, perhaps, hardly be believed at this date. The Rev. Dr. Turner<sup>4</sup> heard them from the perpetrators themselves, and made known the facts. "They say," he wrote, "they get a chief on board, and keep him until they get boat-loads of wood for his rescue. After getting the wood, they take away the poor man still and sell him for more wood at another place, there to be a slave, or more likely a roast for the next meal. At this place they will pick up some other person, and off with him again. If they take some Tanna men in this way to Erromanga, they will return to Tanna and say, 'Oh, they were killed at Erromanga!' And at Erromanga they will say the same of any Erromangans who have been left here."

Dr. Turner likewise wrote strongly of the infamous method of extorting the wood from the natives. "A dishonest trader will show a cat; a boat-load of sandal-wood is brought for it; he tells them to bring more; and after all he keeps the cat, and, la

—+h

the wood. . . . It is reported that this very party now at anchor took a chief of Cook's Bay lately; first mangled his body on board, then threw him into the sea and shot at him as a target. Dating from a sandal-wood expedition which was at Erromanga not long before Mr. Williams was killed up to the present time, I can reckon no fewer than *three hundred and twenty-two souls* who have perished in the traffic."

It is far from my intention to speak as if all connected with this trade bore the same vicious dispositions that characterised some. As the years went on and the trade fell into the hands of companies, it improved very much, and I can honestly affirm that there were those in the employ of these companies who were men of high moral character, and who would have scorned to do a mean action. There were bright exceptions to the rule of cruelty, but so appalling were the atrocities in contrast, that the days of the early sandal-wood traffic are but a page of misery and blood.

Here is a passage written by Dr. Turner:—

"ANEITYUM, 17th April, 1845.

"Hearing that some white men had taken up their abode on a small sand-bank on the other side of the island and also that a chief there has long been wishing a teacher, we determined to visit both parties. Taking Simeoni with us as our pilot and interpreter, we left the ship this morning at daylight. For a time we kept inside the reef, and then had to strike out to sea and along the bold shore. It is a lovely island—fertile, cultivated towards the sea, and well-watered. Here and there we saw in the distance a silvery waterfall among the mountain gorges. By nine, we were at the little island, quite a sand-bank, and, with another one, forming a pretty good harbour between them and the

mainland. Here we found a jetty, flag-staff, weather-boarded<sup>h</sup> houses, piles of sandal-wood, a rusty swivel mounted here and there, and every appearance of a foreign settlement. A Mr. Murphy came down as we landed, and conducted us to the store, where we sat for a little. He said that Captain Paddon, who was at the head of the concern, was absent; that they came here in January; that they have two vessels collecting sandal-wood; and that they have advertised the place in the colonial papers as a convenient harbour for whaling and other vessels. He says they have bought the island from the natives. Our teachers confirm this, and add that they paid for it an axe, a rug, and a string of beads. It is little more than a mile in circumference, without a cocoanut and hardly a blade of grass. It was considered by the natives a haunted spot, and hence they never planted anything on it. They had no objection, however, to sell it to the white men."

Such is the extract from Dr. Turner's journals of his first visit to the New Hebrides, after he had fled with Dr. Nisbet in 1843 from the inhospitable shores of Tanna.

On the memorable day of Williams's martyrdom, Captain Rodd, who was then an apprentice on the *Camden*, discovered that the sandal-wood tree grew on Erromanga. Returning to Sydney, he made known his information, and was engaged by Captain R. Towns for the trade. I remember meeting Rodd at Aneityum many years ago. He was a dark-complexioned, short but well-set, man; had lost his right arm and his right eye in the traffic, and was then, I should think, not more than forty-five years old. But it seems that Captain Paddon was really the first to open a regular trading

station in the group, to which the wood was gathered from the different islands and re-shipped.

To Captain Joseph Hastings, for several years engaged in the trade and noted for his great cordiality towards the mission and his high sense of honour, I am indebted for many facts regarding the sandal-wood traffic. Captain Hastings, whom I had the pleasure of knowing when on Aneityum, and whom I again met lately in Sydney, was in the employ of Captain Burns, of Sydney. Dr. Steel mentions that "he was proverbial for his kindness to the missionaries," and they, in their turn, entertained a deep respect for him. It was he that removed Dr. Paton and Mr. Matheson in their time of trial and danger from Tanna, doing all in his power for their comfort, though fourteen days elapsed before his schooner, the *Spec*, reached Aneityum.<sup>6</sup> Captain Hastings sympathised very deeply with them in their trouble. "I really believe," he wrote to me, "that the Tanna men would have killed them all that day." Dr. Steel remarks that Captain Hastings "was popular among the natives too, and some in the labour-traffic used his name to get men on board".

Captain Paddon, who then owned and commanded the *Brigand*, whilst on a voyage to China, had seen a vessel discharging sandal-wood, and, being a shrewd business man, made inquiries and found out where it was collected and what barter was required. Sailing from New Zealand in 1843, he arrived at Maré in the Loyalty Group,<sup>7</sup> and while on that island had a hard fight with the natives, with loss of life on both sides. Some time later Paddon and his company, in the *Brigand* and *Rover's Bride*, moved over to the small island near Aneityum, from there working Erromanga and the Isle of Pines, off the coast of New Caledonia. He succeeded very well, so much so that in a year or two he purchased



three vessels, one being a steamer. They were all totally wrecked in a hurricane soon afterwards, and new ships had to be bought. "His intention," says Captain Hastings, "was to take the engine and boilers from the steamer and make her into a sailer. Then to erect a sugar-mill with the boiler and engine. He had brought Mr. Henry from Sydney for this purpose, as smith and engineer, and Mr. Underwood as boat-builder."

Later on Captain Paddon removed to Port Resolution, on Tanna, and from thence to Erromanga, where the sandal-wood was so plentiful, and where, in 1855, he took Captain Edwards into partnership with him. The trade on this island at that time must have been very great, "many thousands of tons being shipped direct to China". The profits, too, must have been something enormous. Captain Hastings says: "During the time I was in the trade—nine years, from April, 1859, until May, 1868—the sandal-wood value in China used to rise and fall frequently, from £30 to £50 per ton. In nine years our firm collected 1,600 tons, which, say at £40 per ton, would amount to £64,000. The vessels' working expenses, insurances, wages, cost of trade, etc., were considerable. I often used to work it up to see what our owner was clearing in the business, and I believe his profits to have been £22,400. I truly believe some of the other firms used to trade and get their wood much cheaper than we did. *How*, I don't wish to speak about, but you have often heard from others some reports about all doings." It has been stated that on Erromanga alone, one trader made the almost fabulous sum of £75,000.

As late as 1848, the year of Rev. Dr. Geddie's arrival, and long afterwards, tragic events in connection with this trade were of frequent occurrence. The *John Williams* was at Port Resolution, on Tanna, when Dr. Geddie

wrote thus : " This evening a brigantine came into port. She mounted several swivels on her bulwarks, so arranged as to turn in every direction. Her appearance was most piratical. She proved to be the *Terror*, of Sydney, a sandal-wood trader, just from the island of Erromanga. Her mate and some of the crew came on board, and from them we learnt the particulars about the sandal-wood trade. The loss of life in this traffic is very considerable. Massacres of ships' crews are now of common occurrence on sandal-wood islands, but this loss of life is trifling when compared to that of the natives. Erromanga and many other islands have been deluged with the blood of their own inhabitants. The sandal-wood has thrown many of these islands into such a state as to render them impervious to the entrance of the Gospel. On Erromanga, the natives have vowed that no foreigner shall ever live among them. One of the teachers came off to us from the west side of the harbour in the course of the afternoon. From him we learned the particulars of an awful tragedy. A native of Erromanga, who had come in the sandal-wood trader, had landed, and no sooner landed than he was killed, roasted, and eaten by the Tannese. Many Tannese have been taken to Erromanga by vessels, to aid in the collection of sandal-wood, who have never returned, and so the Tannese take revenge whenever they can ; and, in like manner, if a Tannese falls into the hands of the Erromangans his doom is certain. The poor Erromangan should never have been sent on shore, or permitted to leave the vessel, for those on board must have known that it would be death to him."

In writing of this sad occurrence, Dr. Turner, who was also on board the *John Williams* at the same time, remarks : " An Erromangan cannot expect to live five minutes after landing anywhere on this beach. This

mate himself admits this ; says he has seen them with his own eyes massacred on shore directly after landing. The wonder, then, is how that poor man was taken on shore to-day. We can hardly imagine his going of his own accord. We hear that the party on board this schooner have bought upwards of twenty cats and a dog on the beach to-day, and we cannot divest our minds of the dark suspicion that that poor fellow went as part-payment. That the Tannese are capable of such a thing we have no doubt, and, but for the tales of these sandalwooders themselves, the thought would never have entered into our heads that white men could be suspected even of such inhuman barbarities." He tells that a person engaged in the sandal-wood trade once remarked to him : " Mr. Turner, seriously, *you do not mean to say that these Erromangans are men !*"

In February, 1848, the *Elizabeth* went ashore in a gale at Dillon's Bay ; all the white men were drowned but two, and these two were killed by the Erromangans as soon as they got ashore. The natives still point out the high, jagged rock on which the ill-fated ship struck. One of the men, they say, managed to go out on the yard-arm, which had caught in some scrubby trees on the ledge of the rock. After great difficulty in the terrible gale, he reached the shore, but only to meet his death. Two Polynesians belonging to the ship escaped inland ; one, however, was caught and killed immediately. His companion, when discovered, felt sure that he was doomed. To his surprise, the natives said, they spared his life. He was taken to a southern village, kindly treated and well fed by the old chief, Ungkerilo. *But for what purpose ?* One day, all unsuspecting, the poor man was killed by his treacherous host, and his body devoured at the next cannibal feast.

Here is another case mentioned by Turner : A ship's

boat had been seized by the natives of a spot fifteen miles south of Dillon's Bay. "They were out in deep water, but the natives upset the boat. One of the crew clung to the keel and was killed directly. The rest swam out to sea towards the vessel. They had a current in their favour, and, as the natives were busy picking up the contents of the boat, they escaped. One of them was four hours in the water, and has been insensible ever since. Another, who had a blow on the head from a tomahawk, is also out of his mind."

This awful bloodshed! It seemed as if there was never to be an end. And, in these instances, we see that the fault lay with the cruel savages of Erromanga and not with their poor victims. The islanders at that time were in a state of constant warfare with the sandal-wooders. Dr. Turner writes: "They have now a daring scheme of getting under the boat and upsetting it. They go off, swimming with one arm, a tomahawk under the other, and a log of sandal-wood as a bait. While the log is being hauled into the boat, they dive under the keel, tip it over, and then go at the white men with their tomahawks. The guns of the ship are then loaded, some natives shot, and thus goes on the perpetual war."

Captain Hastings says: "A number of vessels used to work Erromanga, and, when full of wood, go straight on to China. The *Sir John Byng*, Captain Forbes, and the *Freak*, Captain Burns, made two voyages each, and the proceeds of the sandal-wood went a long way in purchasing a return cargo of tea and goods for Sydney. These vessels all carried white crews. In my time the greater proportion was of natives." He mentions that the trade in most request at Tanna was muskets, powder, caps, tomahawks, knives, fish-hooks, red ochre,<sup>8</sup> pipes, tobacco, shot, and tortoise-shell (with which the natives

made ear-rings). It will be noticed that the Tannese dispensed with such trifles as calico and prints for dress, but at some of the other islands these were in great demand. "The calico was sold in fathoms, and the purchaser liked to measure it himself, or to get a *long-armed friend* to do it for him."

In addition to sandal-wood, hogs were purchased at several places. "We paid four fathoms (or eight yards) for a hog, weighing about 90 or 100 lb.; for a large turkey, three yards of navy blue, and sometimes, when hogs were plentiful, the Frenchmen would offer for each one yard—value fivepence. It was astonishing to see the number of pigs taken from Tanna alone. In 1865, an agent took from that island 1,500, and another vessel took 1,600. There were three vessels besides, which, I suppose, collected nearly the same number; so, at these figures, the Tannese must have sold to traders in that particular year about 8,000 pigs."

Sandal-wood was not found on all the New Hebridean islands. Captain Hastings says: "I landed seventy men on Malekula, Aurora and Sandwich islands, but could not succeed in finding any except at Sandwich, and that very small and inferior to the wood of Erromanga and Santo." At the present time, the tree, once so plentiful, is fast disappearing, and we have little to remind us that at one time the sandal-wood grew on every hill and clustered in every valley of Erromanga. It is indigenous to the soil, and grows to greater height and strength among the inland mountains than along the sea-shore. In appearance the bark, which is rough and of a light-brown colour, is somewhat like that of the cherry tree. The narrow leaves, which are of a rich green tint and smooth shiny surface, are not more than three inches in length. They stand out straight from the stalk and in peculiar regularity—four columns of leaves, each leaf

exactly opposite another. There is no odour until the tree is cut, and the very young limbs have none at all. It is said that, unless the bark is removed, the wood loses the sweet scent and becomes useless. The great inland trees grow to a height of from forty to sixty ft., the circumference of the largest being about six ft. The average is about four ft. The mountain sandal-wood is always the finest and has the richest odour. It is exceedingly hard to work.

We can very rarely now secure even a fairly large and good specimen. The sandal-wood is fast becoming a thing of the past, for the traders "killed the goose that laid the golden egg".

Inter-tribal wars, too, have helped to destroy the tree, and the habit that natives have of setting fire to anything and everything has nearly completed the ruin. About three miles from us on the high table-land above the Dillon's Bay valley, there is a fine forest of young trees that I have tried in vain to preserve. They grow to a fair height, and then a man will light a fire near by, sometimes for warmth when he is sleeping on the roadside without shelter, oftener in sheer carelessness and without troubling about consequences—and the beautiful trees are soon smouldering to the ground. The natives do not seem to be able to sympathise with our desire to preserve anything for its beauty alone, or for the sake of old island-memories.

From about the time that Paddon and Edwards opened the trading station at Dillon's Bay in the early "fifties" until about fifteen years later, the trade in sandal-wood was in full vigour. The natives began to know its value, and took care that they got the worth of the treasure in return. During the time that Captain Edwards was on this island, Captains Mair and Ross were also engaged in sandal-wooding. Paddon,

soon after the removal from Aneityum, gave up the island trade and crossed over to Nouméa in New Caledonia, where he lived until his death in 1863. Captain Edwards bought a tract of land some distance up the Dillon's Bay valley, and built a good weather-board house, with a thatched roof. He afterwards moved that house further down the north bank of the river, where it stood for about twenty years, and passed into the hands of the mission after the Henrys left Erromanga. He also built a small house on the high mountain overlooking the north bank of the river, and it was there, I believe, that most of his time was spent. After being some years on Erromanga, he took Mr. Henry into partnership.

From all I have heard from missionaries and others, and judging also by their own life on the island and the accounts which the natives give, both Captain Edwards and Mr. Henry must have been very different from the early sandal-wooders of whom there has been occasion to speak. The natives in their employ were Lifu<sup>9</sup> and Sandwich island men, and, I suppose, also some Erromangans, though every one knows that it is almost impossible to get a man to work steadily and well on his own island. With regard to native crews, Captain Hastings says: "I always preferred the Loyalty islanders; they soon became smart seamen, and very intelligent in the rules for working and steering. Erromangans were good boat-hands. For hard-working and steady station hands, the Tannese and Sandwich islanders we always found good, but not at their respective islands. During my nine years' experience I had tried men, I think, from nearly all the islands in the group, and never had any difficulty or trouble with them. As to dealing with the natives of the New Hebrides, we found those of Santo the most peaceful and reliable; we were able to

land there at all times, and I have often been several miles back from the sea, and was always treated kindly by all that I met."<sup>10</sup>

Speaking particularly of his own trading, he says: "Our principal island for sandal-wood was Santo; I had very little to do with Erromanga. It was a few days after Mr. and Mrs. Gordon were murdered that I began to trade there, and landed a party at Cook's Bay, supplying some Erromangans with trade at other parts of the coast outside the bay. However, our speculation was not a success, and I was not sorry, for it was difficult and dangerous to work Cook's Bay with a dull, sailing vessel. I had several all-night thrashings from storms, and felt very grateful on each occasion when clear of the bay."

Captain Edwards opened up a considerable number of stations on the island, settling men—white and black—to collect the sandal-wood at each place. Sometimes the arrival of the ships would be long delayed, and provisions, of course, be extremely low. In such cases, it often happened that the natives of other islands in the employ of the traders would, in sheer starvation, go to the Erromangan plantations, steal bananas and yams, and cook them for themselves. The Erromangans, in anger, would lie in wait for them, and kill the first foreigner that crossed their path. In this way there was constant fighting—Erromangans, Efatese and others being killed in great numbers.

One of the most vigorous and one of the worst characters among these sandal-wooders was Rangi Toriki, a brown Polynesian.<sup>11</sup> He was a big, powerfully built man, clever to cunningness, and with his stern, commanding manner he exerted a strong influence on all around him. He could make the natives do simply



anything that he told them. The Erromangans say that his strong, giant voice would roar at them when he was speaking of the most trivial matters; it made them "shake and tremble all over". His son Owang's voice, they say, is weak when compared with it. What must Rangi's voice have been! Owang does not speak at all; he simply *shouts*. He is the only living son, and has been with us as man and boy for twenty-seven years.

That Polynesian had twelve Erromangan wives—all of them the daughters of chiefs—and by this means he gained a great deal of influence over the people of their different districts. Some of his wives he bought with calico, axes, guns, etc.; others he gained in war. He had many fights with the surrounding tribes, and, with scarcely an exception, the powerful foreigner was victor. In such cases he would demand the daughter of the chief as a token of his submission. Owang gives me the names of nine of his "mothers,"<sup>12</sup> *viz.* : Natuvia, Walepo, Hori-hori, Lalim, Utevo (his real mother), Ohai, Wosevo, Nampuon and Wolelep. About Ohai, the daughter of the high chief of Soki and an exceptional woman, more must be told later on. Rangi was first settled away in the mountain district, near a beautiful stream, at the spot called Nuru-milungos. Any amount of sandal-wood could be gathered there, and the natives under the great man were kept hard at work.

Later on, his station was moved to Elizabeth Bay, and on the small hill-top Fui, where we have now had a tiny cottage for years, Rangi built his dwelling-house and store-rooms. The rooms were plastered with lime inside, and on the outside weather-boarded; they were large and commodious. He had a horse of his own, cattle in numbers, pigs, dogs, and poultry of all kinds—and with his harem of wives, his children, stores, and his

following, he held the position of a powerful chief, and was feared and hated by the people of the island. He was a bad man; and it is amusing and yet pleasing to hear his son speak of him as a man *who never did any harm!* And, indeed, most natives will say the same, when speaking of their own relations. I have heard men, and good men too, speaking of their fathers—some of the greatest old scamps that ever lived—as if they were half-way on the road to holiness long before the missionaries were heard of.

When Rangi went on his expeditions inland, he left his camp at Fui in charge of his twelve wives. "We, the children, were quite small," says Owang, "but I remember how he used to give the women their guns and say: 'Take care of my house and my *noete*,<sup>13</sup> "property," and, if any one comes to steal, *shoot him!*'" He talked Erromangan like a native, and spoke and understood English quite as well. After being several years on the island, working well, for he was far from being a lazy man, things became "too hot" for Rangi; and he found that a change of residence would be desirable. I believe he got mixed up in native disputes, and, having many secret enemies, feared that he might be overpowered. Wives, children, horses and stores were moved to Havannah harbour on Efaté, and here again he started the sandal-wood business. But from the first he had to be on his guard with the Efatese. Seeing that he had a large amount of property, they agreed to give him another wife in return for some of it. When Rangi's pay arrived, they were dissatisfied, claiming that it was too small for the fine bride he had received. But not another article would he give, and set to work instead to fortify his dwelling from their attacks.

He was killed at last by a man living near Havannah Harbour—one of his many enemies. This man came

to the barricaded dwelling one day, calling to the trader to look at some sandal-wood that he had brought, and that was lying some distance away. All seemed fair, and Rangi, though somewhat suspicious, ventured out, but as he went out he called to one of his wives: "Lalim, follow me, and bring a gun." When the Erromangan woman reached the spot, the stranger alone was there.

"Where is my husband?" she asked in fear.

"Oh! he is not here," the man replied; "he has gone"; and, making a dash at the poor woman with his heavy gun, he killed her instantly. The husband had been murdered just before she came, and his body hurriedly carried off by accomplices.

Rangi's remaining wives and their children were most kindly treated by a chief of Efaté, named Maritimelo, who saw that no harm came to them. A short time afterwards, some of them returned to Erromanga in the *Dayspring*,<sup>14</sup> others following in a trading ship. It is only in speaking of this stay on Efaté that Owang puts the least blame on his father.

"He never did any harm here," he asserts; "he was always kind to us and to the people."

"And why did the Efatese kill him?" we ask.

The poor fellow's head droops.

"*For his own bad work*," is the half-shamed reply.

One cannot but admire the love that will try to shield the name of even a *bad* father from disgrace.

In many ways Owang, who is now about forty years of age, though he looks much younger, is like his father, though a far better man. If it is possible for a man to be a bit of a scamp, who won't hesitate to tell a lie—or two or three of them, if necessary—unreliable, yet most to be depended on in an emergency, and one of the most lovable of our people, then Owang is that man.

He is of no value as a regular servant; there is too much of the slap-dash style about him.

He will paint my whole house, inside and out, in less time than a dozen Erromangans, but—I would not care to say much in praise of the painting when it is done. He must have a small army of boys at his heels, whatever he is doing, and not one of them, big or little, will dare to dispute with or disobey him. Under my training he has become a good carpenter, can lay a floor as well as any man, is quick, energetic and *always* willing.

Whenever I engage him to do any special job, I take good care to tell him first, "No boys, Owang; I don't want any one but yourself".

"Very well, Misi,"<sup>16</sup> is the reply; but somehow or other an hour or so later there seem to be far more arms and legs in attendance on Owang than I bargained for.

"What's this! what's this! boys?" I exclaim; "I thought I said that none of you were to come here."

"Oh! that one has just brought me some nails," says Owang, as he points to a big boy near him, "but these others are all over the place and in my way. Clear out, every one of you," he shouts; "out of my way; how can I work when you are tramping all over the floor?"

They scamper off like so many rats, but Owang has one boy left and is happy.

He is a splendid fellow at a pinch; never forgets the boat in the river on a stormy night, but will be out in a cold, drenching rain, trying to make things safe and give us help. I have known him to swim out, of his own accord, on a dark night, with the river rushing like a torrent, to see that the anchor was secure, and if there is danger threatening us or any belonging to us, we know that Owang will be at hand. He is a kind husband and an affectionate father to his three little

children, and will spend his money as soon as it is earned in comforts for his family. In appearance he is tall, well-built, with square, broad shoulders, and with his fair complexion,<sup>16</sup> good features, and straight, black hair is really a fine-looking man.

Owang has never left us, except once or twice as boat's crew in the *Dayspring*, and once, I think, as boat's crew in a labour vessel. Again and again, recruiters have tried to get him as a permanent hand on the ships, but have never succeeded. They know that, if Owang were to help in recruiting, he could induce nearly every boy on the island to go to Queensland as labour men<sup>17</sup> on the sugar plantations. Fortunately for himself and the Erromangans, Owang is too firm a friend to us, and has always refused to take part in such a "calling".

## CHAPTER III.

### THE APOSTLE OF POLYNESIA.

THE first attempt to make known the Gospel to the inhabitants of the New Hebrides was made in November, 1839, when John Williams, the "Apostle of Polynesia," laid down his life on the shore of Erromanga. His thoughts had turned to this dark Erromanga for many years, and he longed to tell its ignorant people about God's love and about His dear Son, who had died for them. He trusted that the teachers<sup>1</sup> he had on board, who had so nobly offered to go to these isles, might by their words, and not less by their exemplary lives, bring the degraded people to a knowledge of the Saviour. God had planned otherwise; and had ordained that John Williams, by his glorious death, should show forth this wonderful love divine, not only to the unhappy people who caused his death, but to the whole world; for the testimony which he sealed with his blood roused Christians everywhere to be "up and doing".

It was after about twenty-two years of laborious mission-work in the Eastern Pacific that Williams made his fatal visit to the New Hebrides. Under the auspices of the London Missionary Society, he had done a vast amount of pioneering among many of the Eastern islands, had lived at Raiat  a for years, had discovered Rarotonga and commenced the mission there, and built the *Messenger of Peace* during his stay on that island; he had also opened up Samoa and numerous

other fields. The Rev. Dr. Campbell, in his *Martyr of Erromanga*, says: "A spirit of adventure strongly marked the character of Williams. His undaunted soul bore him through a multitude of difficulties which would have deterred most men".

In a letter written as early as 1821, the first outline of his scheme for visiting the many isles of the Pacific appeared. It is interesting to note with what ardour Williams spoke of this plan, how his anxiety to reach these lands never abated but rather, month by month, year by year, increased. "A missionary," he wrote, "was never designed by Jesus Christ to gather a congregation of a hundred or two natives, and sit down at his ease, as contented as if every sinner was converted, while thousands around him, and but a few miles off, are eating each other's flesh and drinking each other's blood, living and dying without the Gospel. For my own part I cannot content myself within the narrow limits of a single reef."

In 1830, a long voyage was taken, and the New Hebrides were to be visited. But at Tonga news was heard that made this impossible. On account of gross and heartless injuries inflicted upon the natives of Erromanga by Britishers and Americans, the people were roused to a pitch of madness, and were prepared to revenge themselves on any strangers who might approach their shores. Mr. Williams's decision to relinquish his purpose to visit Erromanga, on hearing of the sad state of affairs there, has been commented upon by the Rev. E. Prout as a "remarkable circumstance when considered in connection with his subsequent history and tragical end". But for the intelligence received from Mr. Henry, Mr. Williams would have then placed himself within the power of the very people, who, when at length he carried his benevolent project

wreaked their vengeance upon his innocent head, in retaliation for wrongs perpetrated so long before by others.

It was not until November of 1839, that his "great voyage" was begun. Contrary to Mr. Williams's usual sanguine nature, he became strangely sad and depressed as the time of his departure drew near. It seemed as if the shadow of the future was shrouding and enveloping his very soul; everything—the tearful looks of his people, the unwonted gloom—was a remarkable contrast to his former leave-takings. On his last Sabbath, the last which he was ever to spend with his devoted wife and family, John Williams preached from Acts xx. 36-38, specially referring to the words, "And they all wept sore and fell upon Paul's neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake that they should see his face no more". The scene was a solemn one, and all present were deeply affected. That same night, at midnight, he bade his loved ones a sorrowful good-bye; never before had this deep gloom prevailed, and all hearts were heavy and sad. Williams *knew* that it was his long farewell.

Accompanying him in the *Camden*<sup>2</sup> was Mr. Harris, a young man who, while on a voyage in search of health, had become so deeply interested in the mission that he had resolved to return to England to offer himself to the Society, and, if accepted, give his life to the great work of telling the Gospel to the heathen. Mr. Cunningham, a naturalist, was also a passenger. On the 16th of November, Mr. Williams wrote to a friend thus: "I have just heard dear Captain Morgan say that we are sixty miles off the New Hebrides, so that we should be there early to-morrow morning. This evening we are to have a special prayer-meeting. Oh! how much depends upon the efforts of to-morrow. Will the savages receive us or not? Perhaps at this moment



you or some other kind friend may be wrestling with God for us. The approaching week is to me the most important of my life."

Futúna was reached the next day, and, on the 18th, the *Camden* anchored off Port Resolution, on Tanna. Here three Samoan teachers were left, and thus the first step taken towards the evangelisation of these islands. Towards the evening of Tuesday, the 19th, the ship drew near the coast of Erromanga. She lay-to during the night, and the next day, the 20th, was the day on which they hoped to land. Though cheered by his favourable reception on Tanna and Futuna, Mr. Williams was still feeling sad and depressed, and when morning broke told Mr. Cunningham that he had passed a sleepless night, thinking of the great importance of the work which he was about to undertake. He feared that it might be hard of accomplishment.

A remarkable entry occurs here in Mr. Williams's journal. It is dated "Monday morning, 18th," but from many circumstances it is evident that it was written on Monday evening, after the landing of the teachers on Tanna, when his mind was full of thoughts of the privilege of having been permitted to begin that mission, and, it would seem, also, imbued with a spirit of almost prophetic vision of the tragic event which was to follow. His last written words were: "This is a memorable day, a day which will be transmitted to posterity, and the record of the events which have this day transpired will exist after those who have taken an active part in them have retired into the shades of oblivion, and the results of this day will be——"

Soon after the conversation with Mr. Cunningham, the boat left the ship with the missionaries, and in it were Messrs. Williams and Harris, Mr. Cunningham, Captain Morgan and four sailors. The Captain after-

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wards wrote thus: "On reaching Dillon's Bay, we saw a canoe paddling along shore with three men in her, and by Mr. Williams's desire we lowered down the whale-boat; . . . we spoke to the men in the canoe, and found them to be a far different race of people to those at Tanna, their complexion being darker, and their stature shorter; they were wild in their appearance and extremely shy. . . . We pulled up the bay, and some of the natives on shore ran along the rocks after the boat. On reaching the head of the bay, we saw several natives standing at a distance; we made signs to them to come towards us, but they made signs for us to go away. We threw them some beads on shore, which they eagerly picked up, and came a little closer and received from us some fish-hooks, and beads, and a small looking-glass. On coming to a beautiful valley between the mountains, having a small run of water, we wished to ascertain if it was fresh, and we gave the chief a boat-bucket to fetch us some, and in about half an hour he returned, running with the water, which, I think, gave Mr. Williams and myself more confidence in the natives. They ran and brought us some coconuts, but were still extremely shy. Mr. Williams drank off the water the native brought, and I held his hat to screen him from the sun. He seemed pleased with the natives, and attributed their shyness to the ill-treatment they must have received from foreigners visiting the island on some former occasion. Mr. Cunningham asked him if he thought of going on shore. I think he said he should not have the slightest fear, and then remarked to me: 'Captain, you know we like to take possession of the land, and if we can only leave good impressions on the minds of the natives we can come again and leave teachers; we must be content to do a little'. . . . Mr. Harris asked him if he might go on shore,

or if he had any objection. He said, 'No, not any'. Mr. Harris then waded on shore; as soon as he landed the natives ran from him, but Mr. Williams told him to sit down. He did so, and the natives came close to him, and brought him some cocoanuts and opened them for him to drink. Mr. Williams remarked that he saw a number of native boys playing, and thought it a good sign as implying that the natives had no bad intentions; I said I thought so too, but I would rather see some women also; because when the natives resolve on mischief they send the women out of the way; there were no women on the beach."

All this time Mr. Williams had been sitting in the boat; he now landed, offering his hand to the natives. But they hung back, and seemed averse to meeting his friendly advances. The following description, from the pen of Mr. Cunningham, will tell, better than any words of mine could do, the awful tragedy that followed.

"Mr. Williams called for a few pieces of print, which he divided in small pieces to throw around him. Mr. Harris said he wished to have a stroll inland, which was not objected to, and he walked on, followed by a party of the natives. Mr. Williams and I followed, directing our course up the side of the brook. The looks and manners of the savages I much distrusted, and remarked to Mr. Williams that probably we had to dread the revenge of the natives in consequence of their former quarrels with strangers, wherein, perhaps, some of their friends had been killed. Mr. Williams, I think, did not return me an answer, being engaged at the instant repeating the Samoan numerals to a crowd of boys, one of whom was repeating them after him. I was also trying to get the names of a few things around us, and walked onward. Finding a few shells lying on the bank, I picked them up. On noticing they were of a species

unknown to me, I was in the act of putting them into my pocket when I heard a yell, and instantly Mr. Harris rushed out of the bushes about twenty yards before me. I instantly perceived it was run or die.

"I shouted to Mr. Williams (he being as far behind me as Mr. Harris was in advance), and I sprang forward through the natives that were on the banks of the brook, who all gave way. I looked round, and saw Mr. Harris fall in the brook, and the water dash over him, a number of savages beating him with clubs. Mr. Williams did not run at the instant I called to him, till we heard a shell blow;<sup>3</sup> it was an instant, but too much to lose. I again called to Mr. Williams to run, and I sprang forward for the boat, which was out of sight; it was round a point of bush. Mr. Williams, instead of making for the boat, ran directly down the beach into the water, and a savage after him. It seemed to me that Mr. Williams's intention was to swim off until the boat picked him up. At the instant I sighted the boat, I heard a yell behind me, and, looking round found a savage close after me, with a club. I stooped, and, picking up a stone, struck him so as to stop his further pursuit. The men in the boat had, on seeing Mr. Williams and me running, given the alarm to Captain Morgan, who was on the beach at the time. He and I jumped into the boat at the same instant; several arrows were thrown at the boat.

"Mr. Williams ran into deep water, and the savage close after him. On entering the water he fell forward, but did not attempt to swim, when he received several blows from the club of the native on the arms and over the head. He twice dashed his head under water to avoid the club with which the savage stood over him, ready to strike the instant he arose. I threw two stones from the boat, which, for a moment, averted the progress

of the other native, who was a few paces behind ; but it was only for an instant. The two rushed on our friend, and beat his head, and soon several others joined them. I saw a whole handful of arrows stuck into his body. Though every exertion was used to get up the boat to his assistance, and though only about eighty yards distant, before we got half the distance our friend was dead, and about a dozen savages were dragging the body on the beach, beating it in the most furious manner. A crowd of boys surrounded the body as it lay in the ripple of the beach, and beat it with stones till the waves dashed red on the shore with the blood of their victim. Alas ! that moment of sorrow and agony ! I almost shrieked in distress.

“ Several arrows were shot at us, and one, passing under the arm of one of the men, passed through the lining and entered the timber. This alarmed the men, who remonstrated, as, having no fire-arms to frighten the savages away, it would be madness to approach them, as Mr. Williams was now dead. To this Captain Morgan reluctantly assented, and pulled off out of reach of the arrows, where we lay for an instant to consider what we should do, when it was proposed that we should, if possible, bring up the brig, now about two miles distant, and, under cover of two guns, which she carried, to land, and, if possible, to obtain the bodies which the natives had left on the beach, having stripped off the clothes. We hastened on board, and beat up to the fatal spot ; we could still perceive the white body lying on the beach, and the natives had all left it, which gave us the hope of being able to rescue the remains of our friend from the ferocious cannibals. Our two guns were loaded, and one fired, in hopes that the savages might be alarmed and fly to a distance ; several were still seen on a distant part of the beach. Shot we had none,

but the sailors collected pieces of iron, etc., to use if necessary. Our hopes were soon destroyed, for a crowd of natives ran down the beach and carried away the body when we were within a mile of the spot. In grief we turned our backs and stood from the fatal shores. We had all lost a friend, and one we loved for the love he bore to all and the sincerity with which he conveyed the tidings of peace to the benighted heathen, by whose cruel hands he had now fallen."

When the *Camden* reached Sydney on the 30th of November, Sir George Gipps, then Governor of New South Wales, readily granted the request that a ship of war might proceed at once to Erromanga to recover, if possible, the remains of the martyrs. Accordingly, H.M.S. *Favourite*, Captain Croker, left on 1st February, Mr. Cunningham being on board. On the 27th, the scene of the massacre was reached. After a very long delay, the horrible information was given that the degraded people "had devoured the bodies". Hours passed before the bones and skulls were delivered up to Captain Croker, who at once hastened from the tragic spot.

So fell the first of the martyr-band of Erromanga. The name of Williams is a name that can never die, hallowed as it is by the light of his noble and God-spent life and the splendour of his still nobler death—a life of one great purpose, having for its watchword the "Go ye into all the world"—a death, the glorious entrance into the life eternal and the fulness of his Saviour's life.

Nor must we forget the younger and not less noble man who shed his life's blood on the shores of rocky Erromanga—one who had not even entered on his destined work. We know little about him, but what we do know sets forth strikingly his zeal, his love, and his great ability. He had set his heart on going to labour

in the Marquesas Group, and was then on his way home to offer himself for this work. To us it seems strange that this earnest and well-qualified young man should not have been permitted to carry out his desire. Then labourers in the mission field were few, and were eagerly looked for. We cannot always see the reasons of God's strange dealings. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For, as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts."

In recent years, I have often questioned my Erromangans themselves as to the causes which led to the killing of Williams and Harris, and, although the statements I got from different natives varied slightly in detail, nevertheless they are substantially one and the same. These statements amount to this:—When the ship arrived which brought the strangers to their shores, the people were at once apprehensive lest those on board should land and steal their women and their food, as so many foreigners had done before. Their fears were increased when a boat was pulled to the shore and a party landed. A great annual feast<sup>4</sup> was at that very time in course of preparation, only a few hundred yards from the spot where the boat drew in. Shortly before this time, foreigners from another ship had visited that part of the coast, had stolen a chief's daughter, and committed other grave offences of a like nature. Besides these base and cruel outrages, they had actually cut down a quantity of the yams that had been tied up to upright poles for the approaching feast, and had killed and carried off to the ship a number of pigs. For these reasons, the natives became suspicious when they

saw the boat leave the brig *Camden* and approach the shore.

At once, Auwi-auwi, the chief, gave the order that if these people only landed and remained about the boat and did not interfere in any way or with anything, the Erromangans were not to molest them, but, on the contrary, were to treat them kindly. They willingly sent a man to fetch the water asked for, and also brought down, husked, and opened young cocoanuts for the strangers to drink. But Auwi-auwi had added to his instructions to the people that, if the foreigners attempted to leave the boat, and especially if they should go in the direction of the *nisekar* or 'feast' they were to attack them. He had left his club in the bush,<sup>5</sup> beside a fallen tree, beyond which on no account would the strangers be allowed to proceed; *this was the death-line*.

At first they had tried to get the strangers to leave the spot, in their ordinary way, that is, by waving the hand. Again and again this was repeated, but, instead of taking any notice of it, the white men began one after another to leave the boat, move along the side of the stream, and turn into the bush or scrub land. Immediately the war-whoop was given, and the Erromangans rushed madly upon this small defenceless party, who they now felt sure were their foes. Auwi-auwi, the chief, singled out Williams, bounded after him, overtook him, and felled him with his club—the same that he had hidden by the fallen tree. Others, they say, killed the younger man, Harris. Neither Williams nor Harris was known to the natives as missionaries, and, had it been possible to tell them, what meaning could that term have conveyed to their savage and ignorant minds—all the more that evil and not good had been the outcome of previous visits from foreigners.

The natives who gave me this narrative also stated



that the fact that no fire-arms or weapons of any kind could be seen in the boat made them the more determined to attack, if the white men should proceed in the direction of the *nisekar*. Or, as the natives put it, "See! they have nothing; they are *nindevavu* ;<sup>4</sup> let us smite them." And smite them they did. They further say that, but from the blow from a stone which the third man (Cunningham) gave to his pursuer, stunning him, and checking his pursuit, he would certainly have been killed by that native; for the man was at his heels when Cunningham picked up the stone, struck him, and then bounded forward and sprang into the boat.

When the murderer had killed Williams, the outburst of grief which rang from all the white people in the boat produced for the time a feeling of horror and dismay upon the crowd, which caused them to exclaim, "Have we indeed killed *Nöbu* ?" What have we done? Why all this?" As soon, however, as the boat left to return to the ship they assembled, stripped the clothes from the two missionaries, lashed their bodies to poles, and carried them off to their cannibal feast. Auwi-auwi and his people cooked and devoured the body of Harris in their own village, and close to the scene of the martyrdom. The body of Williams, which, they said, was short and stout, they carried up the south bank of the river, now Williams's River, laid it down on the top of a large, high rock while they rested, and while doing so "amused" themselves by measuring the body as it lay there, and cutting small holes in the rock to indicate its length. Two such holes are to be seen on the top of this rock still, which the natives affirm are those made when the body of John Williams was table-land—an inland district, about three miles distant from Dillon's Bay—where it was exchanged for pigs, measured. It was finally carried to a village on the

which Auwi-auwi's people carried back to their feast. One of the many old men who gave me the foregoing narrative was Numpunare, a *full* brother of the man Auwi-auwi who murdered John Williams. Numpunare himself took part in the massacre, and often described the whole scene to me, not always in the same words, but his statements always agreed the one with the other. Tangkau and Usuo, sons of Auwi-auwi, repeatedly gave me the narrative as related to them by their father, and their accounts were very much the same as Numpunare's. They said that had their father and his people known that the party intended no harm, but had called in *only*,<sup>a</sup> as a native expresses it, they would *not* have been touched. I am inclined to believe this statement, not only from the manner of the natives towards the visiting strangers and their willingness to oblige them by procuring drinking water, but also from the clear description of the whole scene by Captain Morgan and Mr. Cunningham.

Had the natives intended to molest or kill the white men, they would certainly not have made any signs for them to leave their shores at once. On the contrary, they would have resorted to every means in their power to deceive and entrap them. Knowing how cunning and crafty they are, I cannot believe anything else. And even after the missionaries had landed, Auwi-auwi distinctly told his people that the strangers were not to be molested or interfered with in any way, if they remained about the boat and went away quietly without doing any harm. The attack was made, as they firmly believed at the time, to protect their homes and families as well as their property. And, remembering how basely they had been treated by those white men who had visited them just before, need any one wonder at their caution? Not even these excuses, however, can do away with the horror of the tragedy; but we must remember

that the perpetrators were an ignorant, savage people, and, remembering this, pity as well as blame. Their descendants express sorrow for the deed, and speak in terms of loving reverence of the men who laid down their lives for Christ's sake while endeavouring to bring to dark Erromanga the message of the Saviour who died for us all.

The state of the mission on Erromanga from the murder of Williams till Mr. Gordon's settlement in 1857, is clearly given in the following letter written to me by the late Rev. S. Ella, of the London Missionary Society:—

“PETERSHAM, SYDNEY,  
“27th January, 1899.

“MY DEAR BRO. ROBERTSON,

“I have long been waiting for an opportunity to send to Erromanga the few notes I had prepared for you as you requested. I have replied to your queries in the order in which you gave them.

“1. *Teachers of the London Missionary Society since 1839.*—Lasalo and Taniela were the first taken there by the Rev. T. Heath in the *Camden* in May, 1840. They were left at Dillon's Bay. In April, 1841, Rev. A. W. Murray visited Erromanga in the *Camden*, and, finding that the teachers had been barbarously treated by the people, it was decided to remove them. Much difficulty was experienced in getting them away. But for the compassion of one man, named Vorevore, they would have been starved. These teachers were taken to the Isle of Pines, and thus, unfortunately, ended the second attempt to convey the Gospel to Erromanga. Lasalo and Taniela were afterwards murdered on the Isle of Pines.<sup>9</sup> Other attempts were made on

quent voyages to locate teachers on Erromanga, but without avail. In 1849, four natives of Erromanga, Joe, Nana, Nivave, and Neboré, were induced to accompany the missionary deputation to Samoa. They were placed at Mulua,<sup>10</sup> where they remained for nearly three years, and were returned by the *John Williams* in May, 1852. Nivave died when near Erromanga. With them were landed at Dillon's Bay two Rarotongan teachers, Va'a and Akatangi, who were the first teachers settled at that place. Mana acted as assistant there, and Joe at Elizabeth Bay. Meariki, a Rarotongan, was left at Dillon's Bay in 1857; Taevao, a Rarotongan, at Elizabeth Bay. Tuka, a Rarotongan, was placed at Bunkil at this time. Elia, a Samoan, was one of the early teachers. In 1858, an Aneityum teacher came to their aid, placed by Mr. Geddie.

"2. *The Missionary Deputations from 1840.*—Rev. Thos. Heath in the *Camden* in May, 1840, who placed the first teachers on Erromanga.— In April, 1841, Rev. A. W. Murray in the *Camden*. The people were very hostile.— Murray and Turner in the *John Williams*, her first voyage to the New Hebrides, April, 1845, were well received by the natives of Dillon's Bay, except by an old chief who refused to have intercourse with the deputation or receive a teacher.— A second visit in the *John Williams* was made in September, 1846, by the Revs. W. Gill and H. Nisbet; not much was done.— The third visit of the *John Williams* was under the charge of Revs. Turner and Nisbet, September, 1848. So terrible accounts were given of the doings of the sandal-wood traders and of massacres by the natives that the deputation concluded it was inopportune to call at Dillon's Bay.— The fourth voyage was in September, 1849, under Revs. Murray and Hardie. The *John Williams* anchored in Dillon's Bay. Some of the

natives swam off to the ship. Four young men engaged to come with the deputation to Samoa for instruction; these were Joe, Neboré, Mana and Nivave. In December of that year Mr. Geddie wrote to Samoa, saying that he thought teachers might safely be placed at Dillon's Bay.— The fifth voyage of the *John Williams*, in May, 1852, was under Revs. Murray and Sunderland. The four natives were on board; one died near land, the others were returned to Erromanga, and two teachers placed at Dillon's Bay under the care of the chiefs Naiwan and Auwi-auwi, who gave up to the deputation two young men, their near relatives, to be taken to Samoa as hostages. Teachers were also left at Elizabeth Bay and Bunkil.— The sixth voyage of the *John Williams* was in October, 1854, having on board the Revs. Hardie, Sunderland, Creagh and Jones *en route* to Maré, of the Loyalty Islands. Creagh and Jones had been deputed by the Directors of the London Missionary Society to settle on Erromanga. The work there had already made a good beginning; a temporary church had been built at Dillon's Bay, sixty-seven natives had professed to renounce heathenism and were attending worship and schools. Four more teachers were left on Erromanga. On account of sickness the following year, four of the teachers left Erromanga; of these two went to Maré and two to Lifu.<sup>11</sup>— The seventh voyage was in June, 1857. Revs. Drummond and Harbutt now met with Auwi-auwi, who, with Naiwan, pleaded for a missionary. Mr. Gordon was landed with Taivo and Tuka, Rarotongan teachers, on 17th June. Dr. Geddie remained with them for a time.— The eighth voyage was in July, 1858, under Revs. Stallworthy and G. Gill. Mr. Gordon had been well received, and had gone among the people with some acceptance, and services and schools were fairly well attended.— Ninth voyage, October, 1859, under Dr.

Turner, with Revs. Macfarlane and Baker on their way to Lifu. Found Mr. and Mrs. Gordon well. They had moved on to the hill. There had been a reaction and many adherents had withdrawn. Mr. Gordon asked for another missionary for Portinia Bay. They met Auwi-auwi and Uvialau, who murdered Mr. Harris.— Tenth voyage of the *John Williams* was in August, 1861, with Rev. A. W. Murray on board. This was just after the murder of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon. Several Erromangan refugees were found on Aneityum. Mana was carrying on the work at Dillon's Bay, and services and schools were being conducted in other parts of Erromanga. Mr. Murray visited the graves of the Gordons, by the side of the river, and found them well kept and fenced in by bamboos and reeds.— The following year I called at Aneityum and received some sad relics of the martyrs to forward to their friends.— My next visit was in 1864, when I met with the murderer of Mr. Gordon, and gave him a sound talking to, and warned him that he would have to answer for his crime to God and an earthly judge. We visited the graves and the scene of the murders, and Captain Fraser took photographs of these places.

“Regarding the sandal-wood trade I have already given you some information. It was a barbarous business, and one followed by bloodshed all the way from its initiation *before* the murder of Williams and Harris, which was done in revenge for an awful transaction on Erromanga. Of correspondence I had not any with Mr. G. N. Gordon. I had one or two letters from his brother; but I do not know if I preserved them, as I cannot find them now. I have his little book, *The Last Martyrs of Erromanga*. Poor man! he did not anticipate that he was to be the *last* martyr. With our united kind regards,

“Yours sincerely,

“SAML. ELLA.”

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE FIRST-FRUIT; AN OFFERING WITH BLOOD.

IT was on the 17th of June, 1857, that the Rev. George Nichol Gordon and Mrs. Gordon reached Erromanga, which had been assigned to them as the field of their future labours. Mr. Gordon was a native of Prince Edward's Island. He had founded the City Mission in Halifax, and was its first missionary. He gave himself a thorough course of training for his missionary work, and was ordained in September, 1855, leaving Nova Scotia very shortly afterwards for England. During his stay in London he met Miss Ellen C. Powell, who became his wife. They were married on 5th June, 1856, and, after a short visit to Paris, they left Gravesend towards the end of July, in the *John Williams*. The vessel called at Capetown, Hobart, and Sydney; and, going with it through the Eastern Pacific, Mr. and Mrs. Gordon at last reached the New Hebrides. In a letter to the Rev. J. Bayne,<sup>1</sup> of Nova Scotia, written at Tahiti, Mrs. Gordon said, "I have no reason to regret not getting directly to the New Hebrides from Sydney, though our passage was long and wearisome. For, probably a deputation from Samoa may accompany us to the New Hebrides, who, by their counsels and those of our own missionaries, are likely to relieve our minds considerably from anxiety as to our destination. I have laboured nearly as much in the Australian colonies for the London Missionary Society as for my own, and

trust some sincere friends have been made to the good cause."

On the 5th of June, 1857, the *John Williams*<sup>2</sup> arrived at Aneityum, Messrs. Harbutt and Drummond, the deputation from Samoa, being on board, with Mr. and Mrs. Gordon. After four days spent at Aneityum, they were joined by Messrs. Geddie<sup>3</sup> and Inglis of that island, and the vessel proceeded to Port Resolution, on Tanna. The *John Knox*<sup>4</sup> accompanied the *John Williams* as far as Erromanga that Mr. Geddie and Mr. Inglis might return in her to Aneityum, allowing the *John Williams* to proceed on her voyage. At Port Resolution things were found in a very disturbed state, and the other missionaries advised Mr. Gordon to proceed to Erromanga, with a view of settling on that island. Dillon's Bay was reached, probably about the 14th or 15th of June, as we find the vessel was at Tanna on the 13th.

In describing their settlement I cannot do better than quote what Mr. Geddie wrote at the time about it: "June 19th.—Our first object at Dillon's Bay was to see the principal chief, Naiwan, but we were sorry to learn that he was not at home. He had gone to another part of the island to consult with his brother-chiefs about a war which had been going on for some time. We sent for him, but his friends would not consent to his leaving them. He sent word to us that he wished Mr. Gordon to remain and occupy the piece of land which he had formerly given to the teachers. The people also were most anxious for a missionary. Under these circumstances we felt no difficulty in recommending Erromanga to Mr. Gordon as a field of labour, and he approved of it himself."

The deputation, having done all in their power to make the Gordons comfortable, left in the *John Williams* and the *John Knox* to return to their own fields of



labour. As to the *comforts* of the Gordons, their house could not possibly have been either commodious or comfortable. I am not able to say what it was like, but I do know what expenditure of strength and time it takes to build one of the old-fashioned mission-houses of the New Hebrides—the houses of rough poles, wattle, and plaster, of concrete floors and thatched roofs. Mr. Gordon's first building worthy of the name of a house must have been simply of native material, and erected by his own hands, with whatever rough help he could get from native lads who might be willing to assist him. That it was not such a house as this even, but a *grass hut*, which was their first abode in Dillon's Bay, is evident from the fact that the deputation could not have been more than two or three days with them at Erromanga. Mr. Geddie wrote: "On the afternoon of Wednesday, the 17th inst., all the supplies belonging to Mr. Gordon being landed, we went on shore to visit him in his own house. Our party consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Harbutt, Mr. and Mrs. Inglis, Mr. Drummond, Captain Williams and myself. After an early tea, we had a prayer-meeting, which, in our circumstances, was very solemn. Our brethren and sisters then bade us adieu, and the *John Williams* was soon under way for the other islands. Instead of going on board the *John Knox*, I spent the night on shore with Mr. and Mrs. Gordon, which was their first night on Erromanga. It was pleasing to see them so comfortable in their new home."

The settlement of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon marked a turning-point in the Erromangan Mission; for, although Williams and Harris fell as martyrs on this island, they had not laboured on it, and were, in fact, only a few minutes on shore when they were killed. Then, as has already been shown, some missionaries of the London Missionary Society paid almost annual visits from the

year of the massacre, and teachers from the field worked by the same society were settled on the island. But Mr. and Mrs. Gordon were the first European missionaries who ever lived on Erromanga.

That we may be in a position to fully appreciate the great work they did on Erromanga, let us think of their circumstances and surroundings. They were *all alone*, in so far as sympathy with them and in their work could have helped. Probably not one individual, white or black, on all that large island had the slightest interest in the success of their work or sympathy in their sufferings; while there were not a few, of fair as well as of dark skins, who regarded these messengers of God with anything but friendly feelings. The distance south from the island of Erromanga to Tanna or to the coast of Efaté on the north, is greater than that which separates any other two islands in the group from its nearest neighbour. Of missionary neighbours the Gordons had *none*. Means of sending or receiving letters from the civilised world were few and far between, and the same thing was true as regarded means of receiving their food supplies and other stores. The climate is relaxing, and they had no congenial friends to cheer them in their loneliness, which at times must have been almost too much even for their strong faith. As for natives, they seem to take a peculiar delight in not only looking at the dark side of everything, but also in being the first to tell bad tidings, and especially if these bad tidings have a tinge of bitterness in them for the hearer. They will enlarge on all that is fearful and depressing at the very time, it may be, that a loved one is lying sick and suffering, and when one needs a bright and cheerful friend, not an alarmist. Even when they become sincere and true Christians, they do not seem to understand the constant care and toil of their missionary, and do not sympathise

as they might with his longings and plans for the carrying on of the work. If we find, then, that the missionary receives so little sympathy from Christian natives, need we wonder if he should receive *none at all* from the heathen amongst whom his lot has been cast? However absurd it may seem to us that savages should be willing even for missionaries to dwell among them and teach them something new and foreign to them, is it not far more absurd that we should expect them to know and understand anything about this new doctrine?

It may be asked, why do heathens ask for missionaries, or, at any rate, why are they willing to let them come and dwell among them? It would be hard to state exactly what their reasons are. They seem to have a vague idea that missionaries bring something good and serviceable—some knowledge that will help to protect them from evil spirits and disease-makers. A missionary's presence in a village adds to the importance of the tribe in the eyes of other tribes. Above all, from the missionaries they will get *property*,<sup>5</sup> and for the possession of that they are prepared to do a good deal, and prepared even to hear about this new religion, or if they do not exactly believe and accept it, they will at least tolerate it. For churches or missionaries to expect higher motives from savages is not—to put it mildly—very flattering to their common-sense. By-and-by, when the natives begin to grasp the real object of the missionary, and to reflect and see that Christianity in itself is a good thing, they will become interested, and be willing to receive instruction. Some may even leave their own villages, if distant, in order to learn more, until, if not prevented by their friends, they abandon heathenism altogether and, outwardly at least, adopt the Christian religion. And, if God's Holy Spirit comes into their hearts, there will soon be a great and glori-

change which will be manifest to every one. This may not come suddenly; years may pass before the missionary's soul is gladdened by such a change. Many an able and earnest man has toiled and prayed for long years among a heathen people, and, after all, has seen little fruit of his labours. But the reward is not, "Well done, good and successful servant," but "Well done, good and *faithful* servant".

It was necessary for Mr. and Mrs. Gordon at the very first to learn the language of the people. Many who come as successors in the mission field have benefited by the knowledge of the language which our predecessors acquired, and in some cases have found books either printed or in manuscript ready to our aid. For the Gordons there was *no* such help. They had to go through the slow process of getting words and names of things from any one, young or old, who might be willing to give them and with patience enough to be questioned as to their meaning. An alphabet—perhaps very imperfect at first—has to be formed, words and sentences gradually added, and thus the first attempts made to prepare school-books and to translate catechisms and portions of Scripture. How hard and patiently Mr. Gordon must have worked in studying the language may be seen from the fact that, ten weeks after their settlement at Dillon's Bay, he had translated the Ten Commandments into Erromangan! Not long afterwards, he translated the book of Jonah and some hymns, and actually printed these with his own hand. All this literary work he did while preparing material for and building his own house and a church or school-house, besides native houses for his helpers, and for his kitchen and stores. All these buildings were required at the very outset.

Notwithstanding this heavy manual labour from the

very beginning, Mr. Gordon lost no opportunity of speaking to and teaching the people and of visiting distant parts of the island wherever he durst go. Mrs. Gordon so thoroughly instructed the heathen boys Yomot and Usuo in reading, that, when in time they became earnest and sincere Christians, they were well able to teach others. There were some Eastern teachers<sup>6</sup> with Mr. and Mrs. Gordon in 1857 and 1858; one was settled at Dillon's Bay, one at Elizabeth Bay, and a third at Bunkil—a district about ten miles south of Dillon's Bay. Elizabeth Bay is about the same distance to the north of it, and between these two points Mr. Gordon did most of his missionary work. On several occasions he crossed the islands to Portinia Bay and Cook's Bay, and visited the various tribes in and about those districts. During the four years that Mr. and Mrs. Gordon toiled on the island—long the darkest spot in the whole Pacific—the notorious sandal-wood trade was in full swing; and, to add to their troubles, measles had broken out in 1861. At the same time, tidings reached them of the death of Mr. Johnstone on Tanna and of the sickness and sufferings of other members of the Tanna mission. All this tended to confirm the superstitious Erromangans in their belief in witchcraft and in sacred<sup>7</sup> men, and at the same time deepened, if possible, their dread and hatred of their power. What an arduous field to work Erromanga must have been during those years! It could not surely have surprised any one had Mr. and Mrs. Gordon become disheartened and alarmed. On the contrary, we find them redoubling their efforts for the temporal and spiritual good of all classes of the people, alike of friends and foes.

Of course I never saw Mr. George Gordon, but I know from others that he was a very robust and powerful man, as strong as iron, and absolutely without fear of

any kind. It was my privilege—one that I shall always treasure as deeply interesting—to visit two of Gordon's brothers, in 1883, at the old homestead in Prince Edward's Island, and if George Gordon was anything like them he must indeed have been a splendid sort of man. The brothers were magnificent men, over six feet in height, powerfully built, and with strength of character in every line of their faces.

There remains very little more that needs be said about Mr. and Mrs. Gordon. Their missionary work was faithfully and ably carried on, and is bearing fruit to this day. From time to time, visits were made to them by missionaries, from Samoa and the Loyalty Islands, of the London Missionary Society—that noble society which began the New Hebrides Mission and then generously passed it over to the Presbyterians. They were also visited by the late Bishop Patteson, who himself fell a martyr at Santa Cruz,<sup>8</sup> in 1871, and by at least one of his missionaries, the Rev. Mr. Dudley, now Archdeacon Dudley of Auckland, New Zealand. And as often as possible, of course, members of our own mission from Aneityum and Tanna visited Erromanga. How highly all such visits were appreciated Mr. Gordon's published letters bear ample testimony. His references to them are most touching, revealing on the one hand the loneliness of his situation, and on the other the unbounded joy that visits from friends brought to the hearts of both workers. Notwithstanding his varied and heavy labours, Mr. Gordon had a large correspondence with friends in Canada, England, and Australia, and in most of the mission fields in the Pacific. While prosecuting his studies in Halifax, he came to know intimately Captain Hedley Vicars,<sup>9</sup> whose regiment was at that time stationed there. He worked with him in the City Mission, and afterwards corresponded with him until

that noble Christian soldier fell on the battlefield, in 1857. How Mr. Gordon found time for his manifold labours astonishes me, for I know well what the charge of a large mission field means. But the strongest man's labours have a limit, and it is not surprising to find this man of iron frame almost break down at times.

Mrs. Gordon never had good health on the low valley-land of Dillon's Bay, and was subject to frequent attacks of fever and ague. Her strength in this way was so much reduced that, when they removed to what is now called Mount Gordon, she had to be carried by the natives, being quite unequal to the effort needed in the ascent. Parts of the track are very difficult and steep, and the spot where their new house stood is about 1,000 ft. above the level of the sea. Mrs. Gordon never again returned to the valley until the fatal 20th of May, when, a martyr for Christ, she was carried to her grave on the banks of Williams's River. The manner of it was this: In January, 1861, four natives of Tanna suffering from measles were taken to Dillon's Bay by the schooner *Blue Bell*, a vessel engaged in the sandalwood trade, and commanded by Captain Bruce, familiarly known there as "Bill Bruce". From those on board that vessel, this disease, so fatal to natives everywhere, spread to the Erromangans. Mr. Gordon had warned them against it immediately, when it became known that the disease was on board, explaining to them the nature of the new sickness. Native-like, they took no heed of his warnings; they mixed with those on board the vessel and, of course, contracted the malady, which spread with alarming rapidity all over the island. Old and young, men and women were stricken down by it, and yet not the slightest precautions were taken by the natives to prevent its inroads.<sup>10</sup> Then, as if to complete the suffering, misery, and death among the people, a

violent hurricane came on in the month of January, and that was followed by others in March, which destroyed the food-plantations and houses of the natives. The poor people, living in wretched old huts or in exposed caves and without their usual excellent diet, were unable to withstand the new epidemic which had visited them. Within a very few months, two thousand of the Erromangans, or one-third of the entire population of the island, were swept into their graves.

During all this time of misery, Mr. Gordon never ceased to go from village to village, carrying nourishing food and other comforts to the suffering ones, and it is a remarkable fact that of about one hundred young people and children who put themselves under his treatment only two died, and one of those was otherwise diseased. But the four years of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon's self-denying toil for the temporal and spiritual good of all the people could not appease the rage of the heathen when they saw their friends falling on every side. They believed that the disease was brought upon them by "sacred men," or makers of disease and hurricanes, of whom Mr. Gordon was the chief, as he had "seen the sickness coming, and had told them how dreadful it was". The Erromangans were, *and are still*, like all the natives of the Pacific, *deeply superstitious*. With them there is no *natural* "cause and effect". Indeed, I never knew a single native, however excellent he might otherwise be, who was not *brimful* of old superstitions. Maddened by the reign of death all around them, and incited by Rangi, the Polynesian, who asserted that missionaries and their new doctrine brought trouble and death, the heathen of Unepang, a very stronghold of Satan on the island, resolved to take the lives of both Mr. and Mrs. Gordon.

the 20th of May, 1861, after breakfast and



morning prayers with his wife, Mr. Gordon left their house on Mount Gordon to work at another house he was then building on the slope of the hill overlooking the valley and about midway between Mount Gordon and Williams's River. Seven or eight young natives who were helping him in this work went with him. One of these Mr. Gordon kept to help him with the building; the others were sent to cut and bring *denyūng*, a long reed-grass, for thatching the roof. Two natives—a girl and a young lad who was acting as cook—were left with Mrs. Gordon.

Shortly before noon a party of nine men from Unepang and Bunkil (Lovo, the chief of Bunkil, being one of their number) arrived at the mission-house and inquired of Mrs. Gordon where her husband was, adding that they wanted calico for *netōitingi*—which is a strip of cloth tied round the loins of the men—as they wished to begin to attend church. Mrs. Gordon told them that he was working at the new house, and they immediately proceeded down the hill. When they got about half-way, they halted in a thick cluster of bush, through which the narrow, steep footpath leads. Lovo, the ringleader, ordered all to sit down. He then reminded Uhuvili and Uven of the oath they had taken that morning on the table-land before they reached the mission-house, and asked if they were *ūnam*, 'unchanged'. They answered freely, *Itnesong, nam ūnam, marima*, 'true for ever, and now for it'. Uhuvili at once rose and started alone for Saddle Hill, where Mr. Gordon was working; the other eight remained in the thicket, ready for the horrid deed. As Uhuvili approached, the young man who was helping Mr. Gordon said, "That is Uhuvili; he is a very bad man, and has murdered many people in his time". Mr. Gordon saluted Uhuvili, and, taking the battle-axe out of his hand, asked him why

he carried such a dangerous weapon, at the same time running his thumb along the edge and remarking how very sharp it was. He then returned it to him. Uhuvili informed Mr. Gordon that a number of men were at the mission-house, and wanted calico. Mr. Gordon wrote on a piece of board: "Give these men a fathom of calico each," and, handing it to the man said, "Take this to Mrs. Gordon, and she will give you what you want".

Uhuvili declined it, and said: "There is a sick man, and we want *you* to come and give him medicine".


Hearing of a sick person, Mr. Gordon at once said: "See!" pointing to a plate containing food, "I have not yet eaten, but I can do that as well at the house as here."

Giving to Uhuvili a cooked yam and also one to the young man who was helping with the building, he asked the chief to lead the way. The man declined, and Mr. Gordon himself walked ahead, Uhuvili following. When they got about half-way to the thicket, they found the dry grass along the track burning, having been lighted by some person. Uhuvili, who has often related to me everything that took place that day, told Mr. Gordon to be careful of his clothes on account of the burning grass. Glancing at Mr. Gordon's face, he saw that for the first time he suspected a deadly plot; he was walking rapidly up the hill, evidently intent on getting into his house. As he reached the fatal gully, Lovo raised his arm to strike, but Mr. Gordon dashed past him. The other men, as he passed, called out, *Kik-e-pau, Misi!* 'love to you, Misi!' and then rose to their feet. As Mr. Gordon came under a half-fallen tree on the track, a native standing on the tree struck him in the back with his axe. Still the doomed man tried to push his way over the boulders on the path. A second savage struck at

him, and Mr. Gordon, raising his right arm to ward off the blow, received a severe gash across the palm of his hand, but grasped the axe and threw the native right off the track. Another man struck at him then, but his axe, too, was seized. Hearing the yells of his pursuers, he turned, and seeing Uhuvili and Lovo rushing behind, he dropped the axe, gave a despairing call, and struggled up the steep. By this time he was panting from exertion and weak from loss of blood. In another moment Uhuvili was upon him, and swinging his axe aloft plunged it into Mr. Gordon's neck. The victim fell forward on his face. The murderer then with his axe dragged his victim down into a hut by the side of the path, and with the other fiends of black skins and blacker souls sat around and mocked his death-throes.

Uven, who had undertaken to complete that day's tragedy, now hastened to the mission-house. Poor Mrs. Gordon had heard the yells of the savages, and, evidently fearing the worst, asked Uven what the noise meant. He replied that it was only the boys playing. Turning with a trembling heart, she asked: "Where are the boys?" Uven, seeing his opportunity, struck her in the shoulder with his axe, and she fell at his feet. Another blow nearly severed her head from her body, and all was over. How sad that these savages could not spare even this gentle lady! Her brother-in-law, James Gordon, wrote of her death: "Thus fell Ellen Catherine Gordon, the fourth martyr of Erromanga—and most a martyr of the four. . . . Poor lamb! what had *she* done to incur their resentment or savage ferocity".

By this time, the murderers of Mr. Gordon were at hand, hurrying to their homes, and Uven joined them. Numpwot, the young cook, got his bow and arrows



to pursue them, but they had finished their work, and, fearing revenge from some of the chiefs and people of Dillon's Bay district, fled to Bunkil with all haste. The little girl who was with Mrs. Gordon ran down the hill and called to the young men who were cutting grass for thatching. From her manner and signs they suspected what had just happened, and, as Yomot, who was one of their number, has often told me, they fairly raced up the hill, and found the body of their beloved missionary lying in a pool of blood from which a tiny stream was trickling down the stony path. On reaching the mission-house, they found Mrs. Gordon's body lying on the ground by the kitchen door. They hurriedly tied up in mats the remains of their martyred missionaries, and bore them down the mountain to the place of burial on the south bank of Williams's River, and not a hundred yards from the spot where John Williams and James Harris—the first martyrs of Erromanga—fell in November, 1839. Mr. Milne, a gentleman connected with the sandal-wood establishment at Dillon's Bay, rendered all the assistance he could, while these men, with sobs and tears, were digging a grave for the bravest and truest friends they had ever had. Mr. Milne removed Mrs. Gordon's marriage-ring from her finger and cut off a lock of her hair, clotted with blood, before the last act of love and tenderness and respect was paid to the dead ones. The sad relics were sent to Mr. Geddie, who forwarded them to Mrs. Gordon's mother in England. The bodies having been gently lowered into the same grave, Mana, one of the teachers, conducted a short service, and then the little group of friends separated to their lonely abodes, heart-broken, as sheep without a shepherd, and with their own lives in danger.

By the first vessel going to Aneityum, fourteen of the

worshipping band of Erromangans, including Joe and Yomot, fled to that island—the only Christian island in the group at that time, and a true “city of refuge” to those in sickness or trouble. By the massacre of the Gordons and the flight of their few friends to Aneityum from their own dark island, the Erromangan Mission was broken up, as was also the Tanna Mission in the same year by the deaths of Mrs. Paton<sup>11</sup> and Mr. Johnston and the flight to Aneityum of Mrs Johnston, Mr. and Mrs. Matheson and Mr. Paton. These sad events threw the whole Mission and the Churches that had sent these heroic men and women to the foreign field into deep sorrow, but never for one moment did they lose heart or swerve from their marching orders; and their actions soon after gave cheering and unmistakable evidence of this.

The late Rev. W. Wyatt Gill, LL.D., so long an honoured missionary of the London Missionary Society on Mangaia in the Eastern Pacific, kindly let me have, a few years ago, some of his old manuscripts, and permission to use them. They are extremely interesting. One bundle, which is marked the “Sixteenth Voyage of the *John Williams* to Western Polynesia,” contains several references to Erromanga, which, I think, I ought to quote.

“*Aneityum*, 10th October, 1862.—We met in committee. Mr. Geddie is desirous that two of our best teachers be appointed to accompany Mr. Copeland<sup>12</sup> to Erromanga next April or May. Meantime, they are to live with Mr. Copeland, and get initiated into the dialect. Butaura and Butaugi acceded to the wish of our friends. Oh that this may be the dawn of a brighter day for that dark island! Our brethren are anxious that, if possible, Elia should be sent from Samoa to co-operate

with Butauri and Butaugi, as he is well known and is much liked by the Erromangans.

*"Monday morning, 13th October.—*We sailed for Erromanga to restore the remaining *nine* Christian refugees to their own island. On the preceding Sabbath, I preached to the natives in the Rarotongan dialect. As so many Erromangans were present, I called on Naling, one of their number, to pray. He prayed with great fluency and apparent fervour. It was affecting to hear a son of blood-stained Erromanga thus lifting up his heart in prayer to the only living and true God. During most of this day the islands Futúna, Aníwa, Tanna and Erromanga were in sight.

*"Tuesday, 14th October.—*Dropped anchor in Dillon's Bay, Erromanga. The appearance of the coast is much like that of Maré in the Loyalty Islands, the three ridges being very distinctly marked. The interior of the island is different, consisting of mountain ranges. In Dillon's Bay, the land is marvellously rent as if by a mighty convulsion of nature. A goodly river runs down the gorge into the bay. No reef is anywhere visible. The natives poured into the open space facing the harbour from all parts. Their shouts were tremendous when they saw the ship. Hour after hour we watched an almost continuous string of natives laden with food, congregating from either side of the bay. They assembled on Auwi-auwi's land just opposite where we lay at anchor. At length Joe<sup>13</sup> and Mana came off in a canoe, and informed us that the heathen were celebrating their great annual festival, as upon the occasion of the Rev. J. Williams's landing. They were now preparing the food; at sunset they would feast and then hold their dances. Yesterday they were feasting on Woris's land. To-morrow they will proceed to the next district, and so on till their food be exhausted.

“ The five refugee Christians brought back here a short time since by the *John Knox* were quite well. They live in one house for mutual protection. On Sabbath days they hold divine worship, and a few heathen attend. They are threatened from time to time by their heathen fellow-countrymen. The chief on whose land they live is friendly. Auwi-auwi, on whose land the feast is being held, is unfriendly. He is the murderer of Williams. Mr. and Mrs. Gordon lived in his district. It is not at all likely that they could have fallen without his connivance, if not express sanction. Rangi continues the same as ever, telling the chiefs on no account to have anything to do with Christianity, but to be sure to kill the Christian party. We gave a few things to the poor Christians, and exhorted them to hold on their way and simply trust in God. Joe early went ashore alone in his canoe to look after the two Christians left in charge of their premises. As the excitement was so great among the heathen, it was thought that an attack might be made. He speedily returned and reported all safe. We therefore thought it right to land the remaining refugee Erromangans that we brought from Aneityum. Subsequently two of the seven obtained permission to go on with us to Maré, to live there a while under Christian instruction. Mr. Jones and I accompanied them on shore. As we neared the beach, the natives crowded towards the river to look at us—*all* armed with muskets, bows and arrows, and clubs. Even the little children carried weapons. The women are decently attired, like the Aneityumese; the men are nude, besmeared all over with soot and charcoal. Who could help feeling deeply their wretched state! We walked up the river to Mr. Henry's house, and found his family all congregated together in some anxiety on account of their close proximity to the ex-

cited natives. An Efaté man in his employ was killed in the bush a few days ago, when cutting down sandalwood. About one hundred armed natives had been to him that morning, but departed without injuring any of his family. It was his opinion that a missionary might live in safety on Woris's land; and that Woris would keep him informed of the plots of the natives, without, however, imperilling his own safety by taking part with any foreigner. This quite agrees with the statements made to us by Joe and Mana; but we cannot think it right for any missionary living here to be without the means of self-defence. And it is very important that the heathen should know that he is not altogether at their mercy. The Erromangans are really a cowardly race: they strike from behind. They are, however, so habituated to murder that to be unarmed would be a powerful incentive to crime.

"We saw Woris himself; also another chief named Woris who now lives in the interior, having been driven from his land by Auwi-auwi. He is only a boy. We also saw two of Naiwan's sons. These all seemed friendly enough. When we were conversing with Mrs. Henry, we heard deafening shouts drawing nearer and nearer. We were then much amused at seeing, a few yards from where we were standing, a crowd of natives crossing the river, bearing aloft in the air yams, pigs, etc., for the feast. One hand would be thus employed conveying their food over, the other firmly grasping their weapons, being especially careful not to wet their bow-strings, meanwhile swimming with their feet. In the afternoon the anchor was weighed, and we stood off for Maré again. As the sails were unfurled, the whole mass of heathen came to the beach to see our vessel off. The beach was black with them. There could not have been less than two thousand of them. Captain



Williams remarked that he had never before seen so many. Mr. Henry says the natives threatened to kill and eat them all at this feast. I shall never forget the shouting and screaming of one party as they crossed the river a little above Henry's house. They swam with their spears, holding on to the legs and ears of pigs swimming in front of them."

This visit of Dr. Gill's to Dillon's Bay was, as he mentions, more than a year after the martyrdom. Dr. Steel <sup>14</sup> wrote thus: "Bishop Patteson was the first to visit the island after the sad event. He felt the bereavement keenly, for he loved the Gordons and every year called on them as he sailed past. He climbed the steep rocks to their house, and spent a few hours in pleasant intercourse with them. On this occasion he landed, and read the burial service over the graves of the martyrs."

## CHAPTER V.

### HOW PROVIDENCE LED ME TO MY LIFE-WORK.

THE year in which the first *Dayspring*<sup>1</sup> left the shores of Nova Scotia, on her way to the Pacific, marked an era in the history of the New Hebrides Mission and also in that of the Canadian Church. This was the first Presbyterian mission-ship that had ever left British North America, and her building and launching created a new and intense interest, not only among Canadians but in every spot where the money had been given for her construction. For though the *Dayspring* was launched from the shores of Canada and though many there collected money for her building and support, yet had it not been for the indefatigable efforts of the Rev. Dr. Paton among the children, and adults, too, of Australia, the timber which built the ship would still be growing in the forests of Nova Scotia.

At the time of which I write, I was in the employ of Mr. Roderick Mackenzie of Pictou, in Nova Scotia, and, though he was far from being an exacting man, yet the long business hours, with almost no out-door exercise, had a bad effect on my health. I felt that it could only be improved by a complete change. And there was another, and perhaps a stronger, inducement than the recovery of health—a longing to see other countries than my own, and to know more of the myth-like isles of the south, the scenes of perpetual summer, of sunny skies and tropical seas. Returning from a walk one day,

I saw a number of people in a blacksmith's shop, and, youth-like, I, too, went in. The talk turned on the ship that was now being built, and one of the company remarked on "the splendid chance that this would be for a young man to go to the Colonies". I there and then decided that, if in any way it were possible, I would go away in the *Dayspring*. When I spoke to Mr. Mackenzie, though he did not approve of my wish, for, he said, I was simply throwing away any experience I had gained in business, he did not withhold his consent but offered his hearty good wishes for my future. I had fortunately enough money to pay for my passage, and so I applied to Rev. Dr. Bayne, then Convener of the Foreign Mission Committee of our Church. I remember well how he listened to me as I told of my long-cherished wish, and how he said, when I had finished, "*But, ah! you should have a higher object than that*". I could only confess that I had then no higher object. Hearing that in one way only could I have a passage granted in the *Dayspring*, namely, by engaging as a lay-assistant or teacher for the Mission, I made up my mind to sign the ship's articles and work my way out to the New Hebrides.

Great interest was taken in the building and completion of the little vessel of 115 tons, which was rigged as a brigantine. Indeed, every man, woman and child in Pictou seemed to feel as if the *Dayspring* were personal property, and so the launching took place amidst intense enthusiasm. Among the crowd of spectators that day were Mr. Mackenzie, who is now a fellow-worker with me on the New Hebrides Mission, and myself. All was pleasurable excitement, when, as our noble little craft slowly glided down to the water, she was christened by the ever-appropriate name of the *Dayspring*.

Heaven speed the canvas, gallantly unfurl'd,  
To furnish and accommodate a world ;  
To give the pole the produce of the sun,  
And knit th' unsocial climates into one.  
Soft airs and gentle heavings of the wave  
Impel the fleet whose errand is to save—  
To succour wasted regions, and replace  
The smile of Opulence on Sorrow's face.  
Let nothing adverse, nothing unforeseen,  
Impede the bark that ploughs the deep serene,  
Charged with a freight, transcending in its worth  
The gems of India—Nature's rarest birth ;  
That flies, like Gabriel on his Lord's commands,  
A herald of God's love to pagan lands.

—COWPER.

After some time spent at Pictou and Charlotte Town, during which the vessel was thrown open for inspection, the *Dayspring* arrived at Halifax in October, and here again great numbers of interested friends visited her daily. The night before she had sailed from Pictou, a valedictory meeting was held in the Prince's Street Church, presided over by the Rev. Dr. Bayne, who, with Rev. Dr. Roy, addressed the large gathering. I remember well the words of each of the three missionaries, and was specially struck with the intense earnestness of one of them—Mr. Morrison. He did not dread, he said, the work before him, the heathen, the terrors of the deep ; " but," he added, " what I am afraid of is my own heart ". It was afterwards his faithful, brave heart that kept him up through sickness, sorrow and loneliness on the islands till the welcome " rest after weariness " came. After Mr. Morrison's address, Mr. M'Culloch spoke, followed by Mr. James Douglas Gordon (the brother of the murdered missionary), who told his listeners not to be too much elated, to remember that seven years ago that night they had said farewell to Mr. and Mrs. Matheson, and that now they must think of the sad reverses on Tanna and Erromanga. In Halifax

another large meeting was held. Dr. Bayne again presided, the three missionaries and others addressing the numbers who gathered to hear them.

On the day following, that is, the 7th of November, 1863, the *Dayspring* left Halifax, the departure being witnessed by a large and enthusiastic crowd of friends. As the beautiful little vessel left her moorings and sailed slowly away, I looked back from her deck and saw a great cloud of white handkerchiefs waving good-bye, and heard cheer after cheer rising from the throng. We were told afterwards that Dr. Bayne both cheered and wept. Turning round, I saw Mr. Gordon sitting by, and looking strangely and steadily back on the fast-receding shores of his native land—the home which he was never to see again—then, hiding his face in his hands, he broke forth into weeping. “Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him; but weep sore for him that goeth away; for he shall return no more, nor see his native country” (Jer. xxii. 10).

We had lovely weather all the way from Halifax to the Cape of Good Hope, and the pleasant but uneventful run of six weeks’ duration was enjoyed by all. We only once came across a ship. Our Captain Fraser<sup>2</sup> hove-to, and sent Mr. Currie, the chief officer, to her, who found that the strangers were short of food and coals. The *Dayspring* was able to supply them, and when Mr. Currie returned he showed us a bunch of green bananas—the first tropical fruit I had ever seen. I was interested in those bananas, so much so that Mr. Currie got interested in me!

“Would you like to try one?” he said.

“Very much,” I replied; “how is it eaten?”

“Just take a good bite,” said he; “no, don’t bother taking the skin off; you won’t get half the right flavour that way.”

It was a long time before I forgot, or was allowed to forget, my first taste of that luscious fruit of the South, and of the day when I was "green" enough to try and eat a green banana, skin and all. The only thing that cheered me up when I thought of it was that I was not the only fool who had ever been taken in by a sailor. If there is one thing that people seem to have unbounded and blissful ignorance about, it is life in the tropics and tropical fruit. "How pleasant it must be," some one once said, "to sit with a book under the shade of a *pine-apple*!" And I know of a gentleman in Fiji to whom a friend remarked: "It must be delightful to lie under the shade of a bread-fruit tree and let the bread-fruit drop into your mouth". "That would be very much the same sensation as when a good-sized pumpkin drops into your mouth from a height of about thirty feet," he replied.

It was in January of 1864 that we reached the Cape of Good Hope, anchoring in Table Bay on a lovely Sunday morning. We spent eleven days there, Mr. Gordon during that time being the guest of the Rev. Mr. Thompson, with whom Mr. and Mrs. George N. Gordon had stayed, seven years before, when on their way to the New Hebrides. From Mr. and Mrs. Thompson and Mr. Solomon, an influential gentleman, head of a printing establishment in the town, we received much kindness, and the stay at the Cape was fraught with many pleasant memories to one and all.

Arriving in Melbourne in March, the *Dayspring* got a warm welcome—indeed, an enthusiastic one—from the many friends of the Mission there. Not the least of the pleasure to us was our meeting with the noble Father of the Mission, Mr. Geddie, and his devoted wife. Mr. and Mrs. Geddie had landed on Aneityum in the year 1848, and were now returning to their native

land of Canada after a long absence. Sixteen years of earnest and self-denying work had been done among the people of Aneityum, which was their station, and many other of the islands had been visited by Mr. Geddie. His was a spirit akin to that of Williams; he was not content to confine his ministrations to one island, but, in his zeal, would have given himself, his strength, and his life, if need be, to the task of evangelising the many. As I looked at the heroic couple for the first time, though I had long known of them, the name of "Geddie" being almost a household word with us in Canada, I saw my ideals of true missionaries. At this time they were in deep sorrow; Mrs. Geddie bowed down with grief at the loss of a darling child; but their thought was ever for others and of their people left behind, in whose hearts they had been helped, by God's grace, to work such a divine change. It is worthy of note that for the long period of fifteen years Mrs. Geddie had never once been off the island of Aneityum, but, when we saw her, though grief-stricken and worn with work, her face still wore the charm of an early beauty. At the outset of their labours they were four years alone on Aneityum; then they were joined by the Rev. John Inglis and Mrs. Inglis, from the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland, the same Church which had furnished the Rev. J. G. Paton for the Mission; and from that time onwards the two missionaries and their wives had worked together on Aneityum—the Geddies at Anelcauhat, the principal port, and the others at Anamé, on the north coast. During that time, the whole of the New Testament had been translated and been printed in the language of the people, and Mr. Geddie had now the Book of Psalms in manuscript, which he intended to get printed in Halifax on his return to his own country.

At the date of our arrival there was no agent for the New Hebrides Mission in the Colonies, but, during the stay of the *Dayspring* in Melbourne, the Rev. J. P. Sunderland, of the London Missionary Society, took a great interest in her, and was daily to be seen showing the numerous visitors—mostly children—all over the vessel, for she was “the children’s ship”.<sup>3</sup> He never grew tired—or, if he did, never showed it in his manner—of explaining, in his bright and graphic way, every little detail in connection with that vessel which seemed to have so charming a place in the hearts of the eager little ones. I remember how he used to bring a crowd of boys and girls into the cabin, and say, “Now, children, if you put a penny in that box, I’ll show you a real missionary”. In would tumble the pennies, and Mr. Geddie would be introduced to the expectant crowd. “Now, another penny, and you’ll see something you never saw before—a little native of Aneityum.” When, after some fumbling in pockets, the pennies would again clink into the box, and they clamoured for a sight of the “little native,” Mr. Sunderland would show Mrs. Geddie’s child. “She’s not black,” the children would exclaim. “Ah! but she’s a native—a real one,” he would laughingly reply. And so on from one part of the ship to another he guided each party of children, always interesting, always ready to explain matters and answer their numerous questions. Through Mr. Geddie’s thoughtful kindness, I had the honour—one I shall never forget—of being introduced to Captain Morgan, who had commanded the London Missionary Society’s ships, the *Camden*<sup>4</sup> and, afterwards, the *John Williams* for so long. He was dark, somewhat below the average height, and had a most gentle and kindly manner. In introducing me Mr. Geddie remarked: “We always look



upon our friend, Captain Morgan, more as a missionary than as a captain ”.

From Aneityum Mr. and Mrs. Geddie had brought with them Lathella, then the foremost chief and, perhaps, the leading man in every way on the island, and also his wife and child, intending to take them to Canada, where their presence could not have failed to create a deep interest. Owing, however, to their poor health, Mr. Geddie was afraid to risk taking them to such a cold climate, and they were to return with us to Aneityum. Every incident so impressed itself on my memory at that time that I can recall, as if it were yesterday, the day on which I first saw Lathella. I was standing on the deck with Mr. Currie, the chief officer, and Mr. Reid, the second, when we caught sight of him—a tall, *very* black but handsome man, scrupulously attired in black, his long clerical coat of alpaca just the fashionable length. He came nearer, holding himself erect, looking grave and dignified, stopped as he reached us, raised his black hat, gave a most stately bow, and presented us with his card on which was inscribed “Lathella, High Chief of Aneityum”. But Lathella was one of nature’s gentlemen, and was just as courteous and refined when dressed in his simple island attire of a shirt and coloured *lava-lava*,<sup>5</sup> bare-footed and bare-headed, as when he donned the European costume and with it European manners. It was Lathella who gave me my first lesson in the Aneityumese language.

While we were in Melbourne, Captain Fraser asked Mr. Geddie if he knew of a good situation for a young man who had been brought up to business. Captain Fraser, I may mention, had given me the option of leaving the *Dayspring* at Capetown if I so desired, and had been a kind friend and adviser throughout the trip. Mr. Geddie at once replied that he knew of just

such a position. An agent, to be on Aneityum, was wanted by a cotton company which had its headquarters in Glasgow; a young man who would live on the island, buy the cotton from the natives, and ship it to Scotland. Messrs. Geddie and Inglis had a power of attorney from them, and were at that very time on the look-out for some one to take the post. This seemed to me the very thing I wanted, and also to the captain, who strongly advised me to apply for the agentship. I had had more of a longing to see life in the islands than in the Colonies, and here was my chance. Though I was deeply interested in the mission and could not think highly enough of those engaged in it, I could not honestly, at that time, have taken any post in the mission-field. My heart would not have been in my work, and, as I understand it, it would not only have been unwise but wrong in the extreme for me to attempt such duties in that spirit. Doubtless, an all-wise God was leading me in this way to my life-work, and I can never look on the years spent in a business capacity on Aneityum as so much time lost, but rather as years of preparation. I did not at once have the appointment given to me. Mr. Geddie decided to leave the matter in the hands of Mr. Inglis, who, being on Aneityum at the time, could perhaps judge better of my fitness for the duties.

Meanwhile at Melbourne, Williamstown, and Geelong we met with much kindness, and a meeting was arranged at Geelong to bid farewell to the *Dayspring* and her passengers. At that meeting Mr. Gordon paid a tribute of praise to Mr. Geddie, speaking of his long and arduous years in the islands, and adding, at the close of his remarks—as he mentioned that he himself and those who had come with him in the *Dayspring* were only starting their work—the words, “Let not him that

girdeth on his armour boast himself as he that putteth it off" (1 Kings xx. 11).

In April we arrived in Sydney, where a month was spent, Captain Fraser having decided to have a new deck-house built. Among the first visitors that came to the ship were the Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Buzacott of Rarotonga, Mr. Macdonald, a staunch friend of the Mission, and Mr. J. H. Goodlet, then quite a young man, who was acting as secretary and treasurer for the *Dayspring*. Dr. Ross, of the London Missionary Society, afterwards kindly took these duties upon himself until the Rev. Dr. Macdonald, of Emerald Hill Presbyterian Church, Melbourne, was appointed agent for the New Hebrides Mission. At Sydney again crowds of visitors flocked to see the vessel; children, all aglow with excitement, speaking of "our ship". As Canadians, some of us, I must confess, felt a little indignant that they thus claimed her. "She is our ship," we would reply; "we built and paid for her." But they were just as certain that their money had paid for her, and that she belonged to them. We were all in the right; for the little vessel belonged to the young people of both countries, and every child who had willingly given his mite and thus owned a nail or plank, as he strutted along the deck, felt as proud, I verily believe, as if the ship, her cargo, and every one in her belonged to him alone. And it was well that it was so; for the very fact of calling her "the children's ship" seemed to endear the *Dayspring* to them all.

The stay in Sydney was a most pleasant one. A party of Aneityumese men, who were acting as crew of a trading vessel, came off one day to inspect our ship, and I heard from them that their vessel would be leaving for the islands sooner than the *Dayspring*. This seemed a splendid chance of sending a letter, and, as all

the missionaries were on shore, I wrote myself to the Rev. J. Copeland, our missionary there, telling him that the *Dayspring* would be at Aneityum in a month's time. Mr. Copeland, on receiving it, was inclined to think that an Irishman had written the note, as no date appeared at the head of it, but, by making inquiries of the men to whom I had given it, he found out the probable time of writing. When we left the port of Sydney, friends from far and near came to the farewell service. It was presided over by one who was ever a staunch believer in missions—my revered and now sainted friend,<sup>6</sup> the Rev. Dr. Steel of St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church. I recall the lithe, handsome figure, the bright glowing countenance, as, roll in hand, he spoke—as Dr. Steel only could speak—words of loving cheer to those who were about to leave. He closed by quoting Dr. Judson's reply to a friend who asked what were the promises of the Burmese Mission, "Bright as the promises of God's Word".

At Sydney, the number of the *Dayspring's* passengers was increased by the addition of the Rev. S. Ella, Mrs. Ella and their three children. Mr. Ella had for many years been connected with the Samoan Mission, and was now on his way to Uvéa, in the Loyalty Islands, off New Caledonia, expecting to join the *John Williams* at Aneityum. This was the first opportunity that the Presbyterian Mission had had to repay, in some little way, the untold kindnesses of the London Missionary Society to *their* workers in the New Hebrides, who, during all the years that they had had no vessel of their own, had been regularly visited on their islands by the *John Williams*, and helped in every possible way. Mr. Ella was then in the prime of life, in appearance dark and slight. Gentle and courteous, he was a thorough English gentleman, and, like Mr. Geddie,

my ideal of what a missionary should be. His work and people seemed to be ever in his thoughts, and it was a great trial to him that, on going to the Loyalty Islands, he was not allowed by the French to land. Mrs. Ella, an Irish lady of exceptionally high culture, charmed us all with her graphic and realistic descriptions of island life and Samoan etiquette. I could never tire listening to her and of hearing the gentle, refined voice describe in such an interesting and pleasing manner scenes and people that were so strange and yet so fascinating to me. The charming Irish tact, the graceful compliments, the kind and sincere heart, endeared Mrs. Ella to one and all. She has only just been "called home," and the blank which she has left in many hearts can never be filled, and her husband has since followed her. Her long life of love, her high Christian character and deep sympathy with every one, whether in trouble or joy, will always be remembered by those who have been able to call her a friend. On board the little *Dayspring* began the acquaintance with Mr. and Mrs. Ella and their family, a friendship that lasted for over thirty-five years. Their kindness to me and mine I can never forget. There were also on board the mission-ship *Simeoni*, an educated Aitutaki teacher, and his wife, who were afterwards settled at Erakor, on the island of Efaté.


A gale near the Isle of Pines, at the southern end of New Caledonia—the only bad weather since leaving Halifax—detained us somewhat, but about a fortnight after leaving Sydney we sighted Tanna, and the next day, 5th June, 1864, at nine o'clock in the morning, we cast anchor in Anelcauhut Harbour of Aneityum. Thirty-seven years have passed since then, and yet that beautiful Sabbath morning and all that took place during the day is as clear in my mind now as it was

then, so many years ago. I cannot forget the strange charm of the island scenery, the lovely little harbour of Anelcauhat, with its blue, blue waters, fringed on the south by the small coral islands of Inyug and Nevin-yughas. As we drew nearer to our anchorage, we caught a glimpse of a fine substantial church and also of the mission-house—a low, rambling cottage with thatched roof, half-concealed amid the tall waving leaves of the cocoanut palms; if you add to this the sight of the fair blue sky over all, you have the picture of Anelcauhat as I first saw it on that never-to-be-forgotten day.

That very morning, Mr. Copeland had gone to the summit of the little hill Nigthima, at the back of the mission-house, to see if there was any sign of the vessel. On reaching the highest point, the little *Dayspring* was in view. Hurrying back, he conducted morning service, and by the time that was over we had reached the anchorage. From the deck of the ship we could see the people streaming out of the church in hundreds. Very soon Mr. Copeland, with his crew of Aneityumese, left the shore, the boat being eagerly watched by us all. How disappointed I was in the appearance of the natives! I had been expecting to see a fine, stalwart race, like our North American Indians; these men were very different.

Mr. Copeland did not wait for the ladder to be lowered, but clambered up the side of the ship, and, with Mr. Morrison's help, sprang on deck. It was arranged that he should bring Mrs. Copeland off in the afternoon, that all might unite in a thanksgiving service for the safe arrival of the *Dayspring*. This was accordingly done, and, a pulpit being rigged on deck, Mr. Copeland gave a short address and engaged in prayer, Mr. Morrison acting as chairman. During Mr. Copeland's first

visit to the *Dayspring*, a very touching incident took place. Umo, an Erromangan who accompanied him, threw himself at Mr. Gordon's feet and clung to him, weeping like a child. He had recognised him by his strong likeness to his martyred brother. Little did we then think that in a few years James Gordon, too, would fall, and by the hand of an Erromangan. After the service, all the missionaries landed but Mr. and Mrs. Ella. Later in the afternoon Mr. Reid, the second officer, and I went on shore, and walked along the beach as far as the grave of Mrs. Matheson, whom Mr. Reid had known in Canada. Towards noon the next day we caught sight of a boat, and, as it drew nearer, saw some one sitting in the stern, dressed in a white suit and broad Panama hat, round which was wound a turban, and carrying a large green umbrella. This was the Rev. John Inglis, of Anamé, who had come as soon as possible to the harbour to welcome the new arrivals. On Wednesday, Lathella, who had returned with us from Melbourne, brought a handsome present of native food—taro, pigs, fowls, cocoanuts, sugar-cane, yams—to the *Dayspring*, and was cordially thanked by the captain for his kindness. That same evening, Mrs. Copeland gave an invitation to us all to come to an "island supper" at her house. Through the kindness of Mr. Morrison, who insisted on taking my place on board, I was able to accept Mrs. Copeland's hospitality. The bountiful repast, which was spread in the dining-room, consisted entirely of island food, such as native pudding—quite a strange dainty to us all—pork, fowl, taro, boiled and roasted, bread-fruit, arrowroot, blanc-mange, bananas—both raw and baked—luscious oranges and the refreshing beverage of the young cocoanut called *nisnangneveng* on Aneityum. We admired the deft way in which Mrs. Copeland's native maids waited on



us all. We were also very much amused by their novel method of going from one side of the table to the other: just by giving their short, grass skirts a "swish," and taking a short cut *under* the table, coming up with a final "swish," and flourish as they rose on the other side, their faces beaming. I don't know whether many ladies would care to introduce this style of waiting at their tables, though it has many advantages. I cannot quite remember whether the food was passed under too, or whether it was not shot over the heads of the guests, gracefully landing on the outstretched palm of the serving-maid, as she emerged from the depths of the "place below".

About a week after our arrival I left the *Dayspring* to take up my work on Aneityum, as agent for the cotton company which I have already mentioned. At first, I only arranged to take the post for six months; before long, however, the company offered me the position permanently. Throughout my stay of four and a half years on the island I had the great advantage of living in Mr. Inglis's own house at Anamé—an arrangement which made everything pleasant for me. At Anelcauhat, too, I received unbounded kindness from Mr. and Mrs. Geddie, and, during their absence in Canada, from the Copelands and M'Cullaghs. With Mrs. Geddie and Mrs. Copeland, who were Canadians, their homes and mine being in the same province, many topics of mutual interest could be discussed. Indeed, it would be hard to decide at which place, Anamé or Anelcauhat, I felt more at home, such was the kindness and interest that all showed towards me. For two years Mr. and Mrs. Copeland were the missionaries of Anelcauhat, then Mr. and Mrs. M'Cullagh took charge until the return of Mr. and Mrs. Geddie from Canada. As most of my time was



spent at Anamé, Mr. Inglis's station, I can speak more fully of the daily work and life there.

Everything was carried on in a methodical manner, and it was marvellous to see the amount of work that both Mr. and Mrs. Inglis managed to do in one day. Their dispositions were very different. Mrs. Inglis was quick of perception, ardent and impulsive, and spoke her mind with no uncertain sound, especially in cases of meanness or wrong-doing. She was a wonderful manager, and trained her native helpers well. No woman possessed a kinder heart or greater sympathy, and she was esteemed by every one for her sterling qualities. Mr. Inglis was calm and reflective, and had remarkable control over his feelings. Being very scholarly, he spent much of his time in his study, besides teaching the more advanced young men of the station four days in every week. He related a story well, and had the happy knack of making the most uninteresting subject full of interest to his listeners. During all the years I knew him I never once saw him ruffled in temper ; indeed, Mrs. Inglis and I used sometimes to think he was *too* gentle, making kind excuses for the natives, alleging indisposition and so on, when *we* knew it was *downright laziness* that was the matter with them.

How cool and deliberate he was on the rare occasions that the mail-bag came ! Even in these days now when letters come six times during the year, most of us are more or less excited and anxious to hear the news, but then it was only *once* in a year that we had regular mails. Generally a boy brought the letters across from the harbour. Mr. Inglis would carry the bag into his study, untie the string and put it away carefully in a drawer, then very deliberately sort the letters, hand Mrs. Inglis hers and give me mine, while his own large budget was laid aside to be perused carefully later on. I am afraid

our haste must have been a mystery to him, for we lost no time in tearing off the envelopes and in trying to read *all* our letters at once. Mr. and Mrs. Inglis were very hospitable, and their home was often a haven of rest to their fellow-missionaries, worn out with the constant anxiety and nervous strain of living on remote and heathen islands. From the stations of Mr. Geddie and Mr. Inglis the younger missionaries were well supplied with Aneityumese teachers and helpers. And, though now the natives of Aneityum are few in number, and may, perhaps, have lost much of their early Christian spirit and missionary zeal, let their noble efforts of by-gone days never be forgotten. When all the other islanders were still ignorant and savage heathen, the men and women of Aneityum were ready at any time to leave their homes and to take their part in telling God's message of love to those sitting in darkness.

The mission buildings at Anamé were extensive, and a picture of neatness. Besides his own dwelling-house, Mr. Inglis had stores and schoolrooms and also houses for the boys and girls under training. The verandahs and floors of some of the rooms were of concrete; these were covered with fine large mats of native workmanship. The roofs of thatch had to be secured by storm-rigging<sup>7</sup> at the end of each year, so as to withstand the dangers of the hurricane season. The annual house-cleaning, which began in April, was a heavy task; then, all this storm-rigging was removed, and often the house was re-thatched, and room after room had to be white-washed. At the present day very few, if any, of the mission-houses in the New Hebrides are covered with thatch, and lime is very little used, so that the heavy labour entailed by house-cleaning in the old time, has, to a great extent, disappeared.

The young people under training were in charge of a

native called Lazarus<sup>8</sup> and his wife Esther, both good helpers for many years. After her husband's death in 1873, Esther continued to serve faithfully until Mr. and Mrs. Inglis left for Scotland, four years later. Among other workers at Anamé I may mention Nalevatimi and his wife, Theganua, and also Epetineto, who, in May 1897, during the Mission Synod at Aneityum, was ordained as the first native pastor in the New Hebrides.

At that time the population of the island was about 2,000; everything seemed bright, and the prospects of the Mission most hopeful. At the stations of the two missionaries a busy life was led, though, for all that, the natives seemed to have a large amount of idle moments; for the young men and boys were to be seen pacing the shore in an easy way, poised spears in their hands, searching for fish, while at low-tide women and children were away out near the reef in their quest for shell-fish. Their careless, happy existence was quite different from anything I had seen in our busy homeland. Everything here seemed so strange to me—the gorgeous tropical plants, the graceful cocoanut palms, showing their feathery outlines against the background of the high Anumeij mountains, enveloped in soft mist, while the gentle swish of the waves lapping on the beach, and their louder roar and dash on the distant reef—a sound that could often lull one to sleep—with the soft rustle of the palm trees at night—all lent a peculiar fascination to the scene. The noise made by the moving palms is often apt to be mistaken for light rain. Once, soon after our arrival, Mr. Gordon and I actually rose from our beds and dressed hurriedly in order to get some cases under shelter, only to find, when we opened our door, a lovely moonlight night and not a sign of rain.

In their heathen state the men of Aneityum had been dressed like the other New Hebridean savages, if dress

it was. The women, however, wore, and do still wear, skirts made of the *pandanus* leaf. A great number of these are donned at one time, one over another, and as they are fairly short, just reaching to the knees, they give their wearers a queer, bunchy appearance. These skirts, with the addition of a short print jacket, formed a woman's week-day attire ; while on Sundays, and on all state occasions, a wonderful head-gear, in the form of a large barrel-shaped bonnet made of plaited *pandanus* leaf, surmounted all. These bonnets were cut into shape and sewed by Esther. The hair on the women's heads being thick and woolly, the bonnets were usually worn on their shoulders, the strings being tied securely in front, and the Aneityumese belle thus equipped was, to herself and her admirers, a thing of beauty. The men, as Christians, were clad in shirts and short kilts or *lava-lava*, no covering being worn on their heads.

## CHAPTER VI.

### LIFE ON ANEITYUM.—MY CALL COMES SUDDENLY.

THE time of waiting the arrival of the L.M.S.'s *John Williams* seemed long. We expected that, soon after our reaching Aneityum in the *Dayspring* in June, 1864, the *John Williams* would appear there. We were beginning to fear that something untoward had happened, when the schooner *Spec* came into the harbour and reported the total wreck of the Missionary Society's vessel off Niué or Savage Island, in the mid-Pacific. On the *Dayspring's* return from the Loyalty group, with Mr. Ella still on board, disappointed in his desire to settle on Uvéa, it was decided that something *must* be done to help on the work of the missionaries in the other groups in these seas. For this purpose, the *John Knox*, the little schooner of twelve and a half tons, which had been in use for mission-work for the previous seven years, was repaired by Mr. Reid, one of the officers, and the sailors of the *Dayspring*. Mr. Copeland and I overhauled a large quantity of goods which lay here, belonging to the London Missionary Society, and packed them in small cases. As many as possible of these were then stowed in the little vessel. Our missionaries, in consultation, had decided to send the *John Knox* on this errand, as, they said, it would not make much difference if she were seized by the French or not. About 200 natives gathered to help in the launching. Mr. Copeland stood on the shore, swinging

his arms and urging them on with *akaija, akaija*, 'all together,' and the response was quick and willing. The schooner left for the Loyalty group, under the command of Mr. Currie, who was able to carry out all his instructions, and landed everything safely for the London Society's missionaries there.

When the *Dayspring* got to Sydney, she needed repairs and stores; but, funds having fallen behind, this seemed impossible. Just at this time Mr. and Mrs. Paton, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Niven, of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland, arrived in the Colonies. Mr. Paton had gone to the home countries three years previously, in order to collect money<sup>1</sup> for the building of the *Dayspring*, and to plead for more missionaries. His efforts had been crowned with great success, but help was now needed again. As soon as he knew of the trouble, with his characteristic energy, he at once set to work to obtain the necessary funds. He was soon able to hand over to the Mission about £500, which enabled Captain Fraser to repair and provision the ship, pay the crew, and fit the *Dayspring* for her next cruise among the islands. Early in June, 1865, she arrived at Aneityum, having as passengers Mr. and Mrs. Paton and child, Mr. and Mrs. Niven, Mrs. Fraser, and also Mrs. Ella, who with her little boy was on her way to rejoin her husband at Uvéa. After the annual meeting which was that year held at Anamé, on Aneityum, Mr. and Mrs. Niven, who had resigned their connection with our Mission, returned to Sydney. Mr. and Mrs. Paton also left by the *Dayspring*. I believe it was during that year that Mr. Paton succeeded in getting a number of Sunday schools in Victoria to guarantee £5 yearly for the support of native teachers on our islands—a splendid plan.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Copeland, too, was on furlough in New Zealand, having left the islands in ill-health some

time previously, so that during that year there were only four missionaries in the group.

After I had been nearly two years on Aneityum, great preparations began for the return to it of Mr. and Mrs. Geddie. They had had a warm, an enthusiastic welcome from the Churches in Canada—those of the “Kirk” Maritime Provinces, as well as from his own branch—for the union of the Presbyterian Churches in Canada had not yet taken place. This visit of their *first* missionary, and one who had done successful work, was a more than ordinary event, and his earnest addresses and the simple story of his labours on Aneityum had a most thrilling effect on his hearers. Since she sent out her first missionary, our Canadian Church has been a *living* Church. Her growth has been marvellous, and as there has been an increase of spiritual grace, so there has been a steady increase of missionary zeal. Her Mission roll now contains about 280 names. Before his return, the degree of Doctor of Divinity had been conferred on Mr. Geddie by Montreal University. Just about this time three young men, Messrs. Cosh, Neilson and Macnair, offered themselves as missionaries for the New Hebrides. They awaited Mr. Geddie’s arrival in Scotland from Canada, that they might proceed to the islands together, and so they all took passage in the *Fearnought*, a sailing ship, and arrived in Melbourne early in 1866.

About the same date the new *John Williams*, which had replaced the vessel wrecked off Savage Island, reached Sydney from England with a number of missionaries on board. Soon after the arrival of the *Fearnought*, Mr. Neilson was married to Miss Geddie, who had accompanied her father and mother from Canada. This year marked an era in the Victorian Church, for Messrs. Paton and Cosh became their representatives

in the Mission. Mr. and Mrs. Copeland having joined the other missionaries in Sydney, the two vessels prepared to leave. As there were so many to go to the New Hebrides, Dr. and Mrs. Geddie and Mr. and Mrs. Neilson agreed to take passage in the *John Williams* as far as Aneityum, the others leaving Sydney a week earlier in the *Dayspring*. I was at Anelcauhat with the M'Cullaghs when she reached Anamé. Poor Mrs. M'Cullagh was very ill at the time. She was so eager to have everything in perfect readiness for Dr. and Mrs. Geddie's return that she worked beyond her strength, and now the excitement of the *Dayspring's* arrival and the prospect of seeing the *John Williams* in a few days completely prostrated her. However, she soon recovered, and with us all, natives included, was able to go on with the preparations. Meanwhile, the *Dayspring* had left for the northern islands.

What excitement there was at the harbour when the *John Williams* came in sight! We watched her anxiously as she headed up to the anchorage, but soon our excitement became dismay when the beautiful little ship crashed on the coral reef. Her forefoot was torn away and the water rushed in in torrents, so much so that her cargo was completely ruined. All hands set to work, crew and missionaries taking their turn at the pumps, and doing all in their power, ably helped by the boats of the Mission and of Underwood the trader. All our efforts, however, proved useless, and she gradually settled down by the stern. The Mission boat with its flag bearing the words "Welcome Home," then left the ship with Dr. and Mrs. Geddie, their youngest child, and Mr. and Mrs. Neilson. As the boat neared the beach, everything seemed to show the interest and pleasure in their return. The Union Jack floated from a flagstaff that I had specially rigged for the day on the hill at



the back of the house; the grounds, always beautiful, looked doubly so that day, and the lovely spot itself seemed to breathe a welcome. As the boat touched the shore Mr. and Mrs. Neilson stepped out, and, at a sign from Lathella, the chief, with a shout the men gathered near, *lifted the boat clear out of the water, and carried it and its occupants up to the gate of the mission premises.* Lathella then led Mrs. Geddie up to the house. The path was lined with people eager to see them, and I noticed that both Dr. and Mrs. Geddie were deeply affected by the sincere and hearty welcome that had been given to them.

Of course, the accident to the *John Williams* cast somewhat of a shadow over our rejoicings. By this time all had landed except Captain Williams (in charge of the ship) and his wife, and also the Rev. James Chalmers,<sup>3</sup> the well-known missionary of New Guinea, and his wife. Chalmers, with his head bandaged (it had been injured by the pump handle), and his sleeves rolled up, worked like a hero. The work went on day after day, perhaps as many as one hundred natives being constantly employed. They were hearty and willing, and the way they helped was beyond all praise.

M'Beth, a thrifty Scot, the apprentice boy on the *John Williams*, came to me one day with a rather troubled face.

"Mr. Robertson," said he, rolling the "r" as only a true Scot can do, "will ye alloo me to put ma box in your store? If the auld *John Williams* is going to the bottom, I don't want to loose ma *claes*; for, man, ye ken, things are terrible dear in the Colonies." And thus he secured his "claes" from harm.

After a week of incessant work, the ship moved into deep water, and redoubled energy had then to be put forth in order to keep her afloat.

It was then arranged that she should return to Sydney, accompanied by the *Dayspring*, under Captain Fraser's command, who would be ready to remove the passengers and crew in case of danger. A party of Aneityumese, twenty-two in all, went as pumpers, and, as I knew the language, the missionaries suggested to me that I should accompany them as interpreter. I had been suffering a good deal from fever, and looked forward with pleasure to the change in Sydney. Mr. and Mrs. Chalmers travelled in the *John Williams*, Mr. and Mrs. M'Cullagh taking passage in the *Dayspring*. It was rather an exciting experience for all, especially for us on the *John Williams*. Captain Fraser wrote out a code of signals to be used in case of the ships becoming separated. The passage was a long one—twenty-two days. At first we had good weather, but, as we got nearer the Australian coast, it became very squally and bitterly cold, with hail and thunder continuing for hours. We once lost sight of the *Dayspring* for twelve hours. By some mistake on the part of the second officer, three white lights on the *John Williams* had been so hung that Captain Fraser took them as the signal to "go about". When we came on deck that evening about nine o'clock there was not a sign of the *Dayspring*. Mr. Turpie (now Captain Turpie, who has been so long in command of the *John Williams*) called out, as he glanced at the three gleaming lights above: "What is the meaning of this? where is the *Dayspring*?" As soon as possible the signal was changed, but it was hours before the mistake was known on the other ship. Captain Fraser, on noticing the first signal, at once went about, but after keeping on that tack for some time, he began to suspect that some blunder had been made, and returned. All through the voyage there had been a friendly rivalry between the two ships, and, of course, as I was a "Dayspringite" on

their deck, I got much chaff from the *John Williams*' folks. "Look at the little thing panting behind," Mr. Turpie would say, holding a tow rope at the stern of the *John Williams*; "well done, little one!" When *my* ship hove in sight, tearing along under full canvas, after being so long missing, I tried to turn the tables on him. "*True blue* for ever!" I shouted; "the *Dayspring* has been to Sydney, and is coming back with our mails."

Twelve out of the twenty-two Aneityumese became ill as we drew near the coast. Poor fellows! they worked well, but it was a great strain on all. Mr. Geddes, the second officer of the *John Williams*, was kindness itself to the men, and would do anything for them. Sometimes the ship made three feet of water in an hour. We were all glad to reach Sydney in safety at last. I don't think I ever in my life slept for such a long stretch at a time after getting ashore. I went to bed at ten o'clock one morning, and did not wake till late the evening of the next day! The *Dayspring* spent only two days in port, and then returned to Aneityum, taking the twenty-two native pumpers back in her. I waited for the repair of the *John Williams*, and spent several weeks in Sydney, enjoying the complete change. During the whole time I was the guest of the Rev. W. M'Intyre,<sup>4</sup> who was then minister of St. George's. Mr. and Mrs. M'Intyre made my stay very pleasant, and nothing could have exceeded their kindness. During that visit I had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Buzacott, widow of the missionary of Rarotonga. When the time for leaving Sydney was come, the fever had quite gone from me, and I felt fit for any work. The *John Williams*, well repaired and looking herself again, had a quick run to the islands. We left on a Thursday, and the following Thursday I handed Mr. Neilson the *Sydney Morning Herald*, dated just a


week before. Mr. and Mrs. Chalmers and also Mr. and Mrs. M'Cullagh returned in her. The *Dayspring* ran up all her flags and fired a salute as we sailed into Anelcauhat Harbour. While we were in Sydney, the annual meeting of the missionaries on the islands had been held, at which Mr. Copeland had been settled on Futuna, Mr. Paton on Aniwa, Mr. Cosh on Pango of Efaté, and Mr. Neilson had been appointed to Tanna. However, at that time the Tannese were unwilling to receive them; so for some time Mr. Neilson took charge of the Erakor station on Efaté, Mr. Morrison having left in failing health. Afterwards Mr. and Mrs. Neilson returned to Tanna and were settled at Port Resolution, where they did sixteen years of work.

All the time that the *John Williams* was in Sydney, the shipwrecked missionaries of the London Missionary Society—Messrs. Davis, Watson and Saville—had been on Aneityum. They now left for their respective stations in their own ship. But the *John Williams* seemed doomed. During a calm, she went ashore on the same reef off Savage Island where her predecessor had come to grief, and became a total wreck. The passengers and crew reached the shore in boats. No lives were lost, but we heard that two or three little children died some time afterwards from the effects of exposure at the time of the disaster. The third *John Williams*, a barque, which replaced the wrecked vessel, was the same that did the work of the Society for so many years, until she was superseded by the present *auxiliary steamer*, which bears the same name.

On the 1st of February, 1868, I had sunstroke, and suffered very much from its effects. About May, the *Dayspring* arrived at Aneityum, having as passengers Mr. and Mrs. Sim, from Ballarat, Victoria, who were taking the voyage for the benefit of their health, and

were deeply interested in mission-work. Their visit to the islands being now ended, it was arranged that the *Dayspring* should take them to Nouméa, whence they could proceed to Sydney by steamer. I resolved to take advantage of this trip, and to go to Nouméa in order to consult a doctor. The *Dayspring* called at Aniwa to pick up Mrs. Paton, who was taking her child—also for medical treatment—to New Caledonia. We called, too, at Erromanga, and saw Mr. and Mrs. Macnair and Mr. Gordon. Only a very short stay was made there. Yomot, the Christian native already mentioned, engaged to go with us as boat's crew. Mr. Gordon objected, but Yomot said he wished to get clothes; so the Captain agreed to take him. Very soon after our arrival in Nouméa, Mr. and Mrs. Sim left for Sydney. Unfortunately, they could only get passages in a miserable little steamer that happened to be leaving just then, but they could not wait, and were glad to get even that chance of reaching the Colonies. The French doctor was consulted by Mrs. Paton and also by myself, and it was not long before we left on our return. Certainly I benefited by the treatment, and, though still weak, felt decidedly better. We again called at Erromanga, and at Tanna, Futuna and Aniwa, where we landed Mrs. Paton and her child.

During the rainy season of 1867, Mr. Gordon had paid a visit to New South Wales. His addresses there were much appreciated, and had stirred the interest of many. Before going away again, he was asked to be the missionary of the Presbyterian Church in that Colony, and agreed to the request. He had a warm place in the hearts of the people, especially the young people, of New South Wales, and his memory is still cherished by those who knew him then. He returned from Sydney to Aneityum in a whaling vessel called the *Coquette*. The



timber and materials for his house were on board, and were landed at Aneityum, while Mr. Gordon himself accepted the captain's kind offer to carry him on to Erromanga.

In the early part of 1868, there came from Canada a letter which changed my whole life. At Anelcauat one evening, after prayers, Dr. Geddie asked me to stay with him for a few minutes before retiring to my room. He then read a letter, addressed to him, from the Convener of the Foreign Mission Committee of the Church of the Maritime Provinces, Canada, asking that I should be their first missionary; for Dr. Geddie, the earliest missionary, had been sent by the United Presbyterian Church in Canada. For some time the "Kirk" <sup>8</sup> had been pleading for representatives in the foreign field. There had been no response. The Rev. Andrew Herdman, M.A., brother of the late Dr. Herdman, Convener of the Foreign Mission Committee of the Established Church in Scotland at that time, suggested my name, having known me well as one connected with his church years before. The letter asked Dr. Geddie to put the matter before me, and, if I should decide to take up this work, to consult with his brother missionaries as to the advisability of my remaining in the islands and preparing for my future work under the direction of one or more of the missionaries. The matter of first moment was, of course, my acceptance of the offer. The letter came as a complete surprise, and, at first, I must confess the contents were almost a shock to me. I could not give an answer there and then, and asked Dr. Geddie, who spoke most kindly and sympathetically, for time to consider the question. It was not till after long and prayerful consideration that I decided, God helping me, to consecrate my life to this great work. I have never regretted the step, for surely

God whose hand has led me, has been my Help and Guide, and His blessings on us and our work have been manifold.

The suggestion that I should remain in the islands, and prepare *there* for my work, I never for one moment entertained. I made up my mind that I would enter the mission-field only as a fully accredited minister, not as a lay preacher. At the meeting held at Aneityum that year the subject was carefully discussed; Mr. Copeland was chairman. After some time I was sent for, and my own opinion heard. All the missionaries, with the exception of two, were strongly in favour of my going home to study. Dr. Geddie and Mr. Gordon thought I should remain in the islands and at once commence mission-work. In substance, the minute passed on the question was: "The application of the committee having been laid before Mr. Robertson and his opinion having been heard, this meeting does not see its way clear to adopt the course indicated, but would recommend that he should return to Nova Scotia, that the Church there should give him every facility to prosecute his studies, that he should be *ordained*, and this Mission will cordially welcome him as a fellow-labourer in these seas". It was then arranged that I should leave the New Hebrides towards the end of that year, 1868.

For over a year Mr. Inglis, Dr. Geddie and I had all been very much disappointed with the prospects of the cotton company for which I was agent. The natives had not taken to the work as heartily as we expected. The company, in the first instance, had been formed on the recommendation of Mr. Inglis, so that, to a certain extent, he felt responsible for the issue. With Dr. Geddie, he had the power of attorney over me, and, long before my decision to leave Aneityum, had

recommended the winding-up of the company's affairs. My movements had no connection with this resolve of his, although, when the application came for me from the Canadian Church and I accepted it, Mr. Inglis and Dr. Geddie both decided to carry it into effect. The cotton machinery was sold and the Directors informed of the reasons for abandoning the venture. I found out afterwards that they were rather disappointed: they did not consider it a failure, as their primary reason was not so much to make money, as to encourage the natives in commerce and thus indirectly to further the interests of the Mission. However, they very rightly agreed that those who were acting for them and on the spot were the best judges in the matter. The natives, when they heard that I was leaving, came to the missionaries and to myself, begging me to remain and promising that they would do their best to prosper the growing of cotton; but our minds were made up. We told them that there was no prospect of any one coming to take my place. Though willing to help, they had far too little energy to make the undertaking a success. During my entire stay on Aneityum, I must say that the people had been particularly kind to me, and were always ready to carry out my wishes. I became very much attached to them all, and often look back on the pleasant years spent on their island now long, long ago. And when the time came for me to leave them, we parted the very best of friends.

In my dealings with them as the company's agent, when I first gave money to the natives, some of their blunders were very amusing. They said they did not want money, it was "no good"; they would much prefer calico and print. It was a long time before they understood that money would buy these things for them. When they did at last realise that, money became a



wonderful thing, and they had the most extraordinary notions of its value, expecting to buy a shawl for one or two coppers. I remember a man coming to me once very confidentially, and showing me some great treasure he had. Layer after layer of banana leaf was removed, strips of grass and leaves thrown away, and at last there lay revealed *one penny*. In return for this he asked "one red blanket, one packet of tea, one packet of sugar, one rat-trap". I asked him what else he would like *with the balance of the money*. "Ah, Mr. Robertson! I will just leave that to yourself," he replied; "give me what you think best, for there is nothing on all this earth that is not good."

Fortunately for me I had picked up the Aneityumese language very quickly, although like others, I had made most ludicrous mistakes at first. Mrs. Copeland very kindly gave me every help, and I learnt by heart a number of useful expressions. But at first, after I had been on shore about three days, I was sure that I knew the language very well indeed. My shoes were wet, and needed drying; so I took them into the kitchen, and handed them to the cook telling him to "burn" them well. He obeyed me unquestioningly; for one shoe was so well *burnt* that there was nothing of it left. Mrs. Copeland rescued the other one, but what was one shoe without its mate. I suppose I deserved to have my self-assurance humbled; certainly this taught me a lesson. We notice that, whenever we make blunders, our natives are extremely polite and will rarely smile at what must be most absurd renderings of their language. Indeed, they are far more careful of our feelings in this respect than we white people of theirs. As a rule, we do not hesitate to laugh heartily at a blunder made in English by a foreigner, but our natives do not do so. If a beginner in the language is speaking,

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they generally understand what is *meant* and will politely assent to what is *said*. Sometimes a native with a strong vein of fun in his nature *will* give way, and burst into a peal of laughter at an absurd mistake, and I have no doubt they have many a humorous moment over these mistakes behind our backs. The change of one letter in a word will make a great difference. Mrs. M'Cullagh one day told, or thought she told, her cook to whitewash the kitchen and blacken the stove. After some time he came, all smiles, asking us to go and inspect his work. At the door, he stood aside, with a look of conscious pride, that we might enter first. What 'a sight met our eyes! He had whitewashed the kitchen, *whitewashed* the stove, the stove-pipe, and every pot and pan in the place. Mr. M'Cullagh was indignant at such stupidity, and the poor cook was quite crestfallen, while Mrs. M'Cullagh and I stood by convulsed with laughter.

When I was first on my way to the islands, in 1864, and while yet in Sydney, Mr. Gordon suggested to Mrs. M'Intyre, in whose house we were staying, that it would be a nice thing to present a cart, plough and harrows to Lathella, the High Chief of Aneityum, who was also with us. Mr. Gordon had heard that Lathella already possessed cattle.<sup>6</sup> Mrs. M'Intyre took up the idea with interest, and soon after, with other friends, made Lathella a gift of several implements for ploughing. Mr. Gordon said he would teach him to plough. Soon after we reached Aneityum, Lathella got his first lesson. These wild bulls of his had never been yoked before, and it took about 150 natives to catch them. The first lesson was a fair success; for, of course, Mr. Gordon did not attempt to do more than yoke the animals. One day, after he had left for Erromanga, Lathella resolved

to do some ploughing. I suggested to him to yoke the bulls to a log first, and gradually get them used to a plough; but no; he insisted that they should begin as they were to end, and it was by much persuasion only that he was led to try the log for a start even. I got him to make a V-shaped enclosure, and after some time the people managed to get one bull inside, and yoked him, fastening the yoke to a tree. Women and boys from their vantage ground of cocoanut trees yelled directions to everybody. By the time we yoked the second bull, the first had torn and trampled the ground for yards around. We yoked them to a log, and off they started up and down near the shore at a terrific pace, until at last the poor brutes fairly panted. Lathella was charmed with the way they were being broken in, and said he would put them in the plough as soon as possible. The next place he turned them to was the food plantation. But the whole settlement was traversed before reaching the swamp where the food plants grew, though we aimed at it from the first. As long as we could keep the bulls out of the church and mission-house, we did not care so much about the circuitous route they took. I told Lathella that he would want clear ground with no trees for training them. He and the other natives seemed to think that the more trees there were the better. Waiheit, one of the most courageous of all, held a great *nagaijai*—a pole for canoeing in shallow water—to protect himself, and every one carried a stick or weapon of some kind. By the time we left the shore, the women were thoroughly frightened, and flew to their own houses for shelter. Just beyond the swamp the log snapped across two trees, and, after tearing round some time, knocking themselves against trees, Lathella's eyes almost standing out of his head, as he called aloud, *Atapenis! atapenis!* 'shut them off! shut them off!' the animals became

thoroughly tired. Only the stronger and more courageous of the men were with us ; the others had disappeared by this time. I told Lathella it was madness to put them in the plough, but he was determined to try it. They were standing panting, and he said they had done splendidly and were well trained indeed.

So we put them in the plough, Waiheit, with all the men, young and old, standing near, ready to help. I told Lathella what depth he was to keep, and he got hold of the plough handles. With a roar the bulls made a plunge forward, and for about twenty feet the plough went right, until it struck what must have been a great stone or a root. The next thing I saw was Lathella shooting up into the air, high above our heads! The bulls turned to the river, while all the young fry—the hope of Aneityum—flew to the cocoanut trees, only Waiheit and two or three others, among them Nomopen and Naubé, remaining. The bulls went up to their necks in the water, dragging the plough after them. By this time both handles were broken. Lathella, who had certainly no lack of pluck, and who was on his feet again, yelled to his men, “Spring on to them, spring on to them, lads!” while I lay on the ground, helpless with laughter. When the animals rushed out of the water again with nothing but the head of the plough behind them, I was afraid they would kill themselves and the men too. We tried to head them off, but it was of no use. They rushed, fairly mad, first towards the cow-byre and then to the sea. The head of the plough, trailing after them, would sometimes bound right up in the air, then come with a thud to the ground again, and often the poor beasts were struck by it. They several times charged Waiheit, but he was ready and belaboured them with his *nagaijai*. Lathella had to give in ; but the younger men still followed the “bullock team” right

down to the shores. As we passed the mission premises, we saw the other cattle standing on the side of the hill, their tails raised in astonishment! The natives, followed closely by the roaring bulls, made for the shore, and the animals rushed after Naubé right into the water. That seemed to quieten them at last, and we managed to lasso them and take the yoke off. I advised Lathella, if he cared for his own and the people's lives, to sell them. Not he. One day he took them up to the hill Nightima and yoked them to the cart. I told him he would kill himself, but he was determined to *train* the animals. He got into the cart when all was ready, a long wooden spear in his hand to guide them with, and a number of people stood on either side of the road, and some in front to keep them from going too far. At the first snort and plunge, all in front took to flight and the bulls raced down the hill. When they were half-way down, Lathella got frightened and jumped out. About fifty yards ahead, a wheel went over the side of the road, one of the animals went right off the edge of the path, and it was not till both had freed themselves and the cart was smashed to matchwood that peace reigned again. That adventure put an end to Lathella's ploughing operations, and right glad we all were when he consented to sell his stock.

I spoke about them to the Captain and Paymaster of the first ship-of-war that came, and received over twenty pounds for the two bulls and one cow. When I handed Lathella the money, he was overjoyed and exclaimed: *Nauhaurineig ak etwak, Misi Robertson!* 'thank you, thank you, my brother!' The money now proved far more useful to him than his cattle, for with it he bought windows, flooring-boards, doors, for his new house, and several good strong boxes. The cattle had done a lot of mischief before their ploughing escapades, and the

people, whose food-plantations they had often invaded, were considerably relieved in mind by their departure.

There is another amusing bit of island-experience which is worth recording. There was an old horse at Aneityum in those days. He looked to me as if he belonged to the era of the ancients. Some of the younger natives did report that Captain Towns had bought him from Captain Paddon, and Captain Dawson said that he came from Erromanga, knew the price of sandal-wood as well as any trader, and could always tell when his master was driving a shrewd bargain.

However, an old man assured me that that was a mistake. "You have been taken in about that horse," he said; "he was landed here *by Captain Cook*, and has been living on the island ever since."

"You don't say so?" I exclaimed.

"Yes, it is the very truth, and he looks as fresh as ever he did." Some time afterwards I was pained to hear that this account was also a mis-statement. The man who put me right scouted the bare idea of "Bob" having been brought by the *Resolution*, and said he had been on the island *before Cook was ever heard of*. At any rate, it is certain, from the state of his wind apparatus, that "Bob" was no youngster. The method of catching him was at once novel and simple. All one had to do was to chase him right round the mission grounds till his breath gave out, and then it was easy enough to saddle him. He would never go further than five miles at a time. We used to start in grand style on our way to Anumej, a crowd of boys following, eager to race us. The first time, I gave them a hundred yards or so of a start; the next time, and ever afterwards, "Bob" had the start. "Now," one of the boys would say, "one, two, three, four, five; off!" for they don't stop at "three"—

four and five are generally added. Off we start, the cavalry charges ahead, and with conscious pride we thunder along the hard sandy shore. It seems as if we are going to win, when "Bob" stops most suddenly, and I have to dismount till his breath comes back.

One night I was returning on his back from Anumej to the mission-station. When near home we were overtaken by darkness, and, before I knew where I was, "Bob" was floundering in quick-sands and mud. Every struggle made matters worse; so slipping myself off the saddle I left him, or rather he left me, for when I was still scrambling in the mud, he was swimming and nearly across the river. I had to go a long distance up the river bank before I could cross, literally feeling my way. But I got home before "Bob"—*his breath had given out again*. Indeed, I believe this inability to keep his breath was the death of him at last. Should I meet a native when in "Bob's" company, we were always greeted with *Ek-aihuec-vai-caurau!* 'love to you two!'

I remember being very much surprised one day, and amused, soon after my arrival on Aneityum, to hear a native speak of meeting a child—a mere infant—who, he said, was going to his cultivation-ground to plant *taro*.<sup>7</sup> The child certainly was going—on his mother's back—but she, as a mere item, was ignored. There is this same custom on Erromanga and, I believe, on all the other islands. Some one will come to us with a message: "Nerimpau is waiting to see you; he wants some tea and sugar". Now Nerimpau is only a few months old, but he is a *natemenuk*, 'a young chief,' and, of course, of ten times more importance than his mother. Not that she would be unkindly treated; the food, or a part of it, is no doubt for herself, but in such cases, out

of etiquette, she must mention, not her own name but that of the little "lord of creation" whom she carries.

Before leaving Aneityum finally, I took a trip in the *Dayspring* as far as Pango, on Efaté, and back. We had some timber for Rev. James Gordon's house on board, and landed it on Erromanga at Portinia Bay, where he had been settled earlier in the year. Mr. Gordon came to meet us at the boat, gave us a cordial welcome, and took us back to his house, which was already built. We were carried across the river by Erromangan natives, and, on reaching his house, we soon had tea prepared for us. He seemed to be very comfortable at his new station, and was having encouragement in his work. We climbed a ladder to his own room, which was above his sitting and dining-rooms, and he told me that he always pulled this ladder up at night before he slept so that he might be more secure from attack. Nothing could have exceeded his kindness to me that day, and it is very pleasing to me to remember and record it; for it was the last time I ever saw him. Though he disapproved of my returning to Nova Scotia for preparation and study, yet as soon as I had decided on doing so he gave me every help and encouragement. Before we said good-bye, he handed me a sealed letter, which I was to read on board. In it his kind words of advice and good wishes closed with Psalm cxxi. 3-8:—

He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He that keepeth thee will not slumber.

Behold! He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.

The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.


The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; He shall preserve thy soul.

The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for ever more.

I left Aneityum towards the end of December, Mr.



and Mrs. Inglis also travelling by the *Dayspring* to New Zealand. It had been agreed that, instead of going to Melbourne, the vessel should, that year, visit New Zealand, in order that her supporters there might see her, and that through Mr. Inglis they might have an opportunity of hearing of the work of the mission and its needs. We arrived in Dunedin on the first days of January, 1869, and, after a pleasant six weeks' visit to the late Rev. George Sutherland, afterwards Dr. Sutherland, of St. George's Presbyterian Church, Sydney, I took passage for London in the barque *Agate*, Captain Brown. The *Agate* was laden with wool, the only other passenger being Mr. Smythe, a young lawyer. Fortunately for me the captain had married a Nova-Scotian girl, and for her sake, I suppose, showed another Nova-Scotian every kindness. I arrived in Canada in May. In the train going from Windsor to Halifax I noticed the Rev. G. M. Grant, of Halifax, afterwards Principal Grant, of Kingston. I introduced myself to him, and he gave me a most hearty welcome, inviting me to stay with him at the manse. The first Sunday after arrival, I addressed his Sunday school, and took service the same evening at the Tower Road, about three miles from Halifax—my first experience of speaking in public. At the next Synod of our Church, which was held at Chatham, New Brunswick, and which I also addressed, I was instructed to attend the Theological Hall and study medicine at Dalhousie College, and was put under the supervision of the Foreign Mission Committee. During the summer my time was occupied in visiting the congregations of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, both of the United Presbyterian and the "Kirk" <sup>5</sup> Churches, and in this way, while giving information about our Mission, I became acquainted with the ministers and people of both Churches. After the letter in reference to me had



been sent to Dr. Geddie, but before I arrived in Canada, the Rev. John Goodwill, of Scotsburn, Pictou, had offered to go to the New Hebrides as the representative of the "Kirk" branch of the Presbyterian Church, so that though I was called to be their first missionary, Mr. Goodwill was actually the first. At the same Synod that designated him to his field, I was accepted, and ordered to proceed with my studies and to follow him to the Mission-field as soon as I should be licensed and ordained.

## CHAPTER VII.

### WHAT HAPPENED DURING MY ABSENCE.

THE Rev. James D. Gordon was not settled on Erromanga till August of 1864. A voyage was first taken in the *Dayspring* through the Loyalty Islands and then the southern islands of the New Hebrides group. Mr. and Mrs. Ella were to take up work on Uvéa, but great was their disappointment on reaching the island to find that the French authorities would not allow them to land. They returned to Aneityum, spending the months of their enforced banishment from Uvéa at Lolanapjis near Anamé. It was a great trial to them both. Mr. Ella *could* not be idle, and during his stay there he printed the whole of Luke's Gospel, a primer and a catechism in Erromangan, and also a hymn-book in Efatese. In many other ways he rendered great help to the missionaries in this group. As we were near, I saw a good deal of Mr. and Mrs. Ella and their family, and I often think of the pleasant evenings spent in the little old lime-built cottage at Lolanapjis and the kind welcome that our friends in it were ever so ready to give. When Mr. Ella was at last allowed to proceed to Uvéa, we rejoiced for his sake, but the loss was ours. Mrs. Ella had first to return to Sydney with her children, who were to be sent from there to school in England. She fainted while sitting on the *Dayspring's* deck one day at the very thought of parting with them. In those days, the separation was often for many years, and letters could

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only be received very rarely. It was indeed a bitter trial, but it was borne by her, and is still borne by others, with the help that can only be had from Him whose solicitude for His people has been likened to the greatest of all earthly affections, the love of a mother.

It was on the 16th of July, 1864, that the *Dayspring*, with Mr. Gordon and others on board, reached Dillon's Bay. Mr. Inglis wrote thus: "On the Monday afternoon we sailed from Efaté to Erromanga. We encountered very heavy winds, in consequence of which we did not reach Erromanga till Friday; we were then becalmed, and did not come to anchor till Saturday. We had the satisfaction to find the Mission in a very encouraging condition. Our Aneityum teacher, Nehieiman, and his wife were both well and in excellent spirits. He had had no rest in going from place to place to assist the natives in building schoolhouses. He has been there little more than a year, and four schoolhouses have been built during that time. A number of elementary books, printed there by Mr. Gordon, but after his death brought to Aneityum, had been lately sent to them and received with much joy.


"On Sabbath we went ashore to the native service. The place of worship was full, and a number sat outside; about 150 were present. One of the natives sang and prayed. Mr. Gordon, who has been studying the language very diligently, read a chapter of his brother's translation of Luke. I addressed them in the Aneityumese language, Nehieiman interpreting, after which he prayed. Mr. Gordon then addressed them shortly in their own tongue, and I pronounced the benediction in English. After this we had the usual services on board.

"On Monday we went ashore again to visit the two spots where the Rev. George N. Gordon and Mrs. Gordon were killed. We passed their grave, which we

had visited on Saturday. The grave is kept very neatly fenced around by the Christian natives. We ascended the mountain and passed the place where Mr. Gordon was working when the native came to him and got him to accompany him on the way to his own house, which stood about half a mile higher up on the edge of the table-land. The site of the house is estimated to be about 1,000 ft. above the level of the sea. . . . The house is all removed, and the foundation is covered with bushes and grass. The natives have planted a bush on the spot where Mrs. Gordon was killed. Captain Fraser took pictures of both these places, and also of some other objects of interest connected with the history of the Mission. We saw some of the spots, still of a reddish-brown colour, where Mr. Gordon's blood had dyed the rocks. The rains and the torrents of three years have not yet washed it out. Nothing, perhaps, is so difficult to wash out as blood. . . .

"From the place where Mr. Gordon's house stood there is a splendid view. A beautiful valley opens up to the eastward, which is seen to great advantage from this point; the river winds gently along at the bottom; here, reflecting the sunbeams from its glassy pools; there, its silvery streams gliding softly over polished pebbles; native cottages are seen peeping out amid the dense, deep green foliage that covers the narrow plains, and reaches from the water's edge to the margin of the table-land, which again spreads onwards to a native grass-flat, and is intersected with ravines running in every direction.

"On returning to the shore, we found that the Christian natives had brought a small present of food for the ship. We had another meeting with them in the school-house. They were greatly pleased to think that Mr. Gordon was likely to come and live with them; but



they were distinct in saying that he must not go up the mountain where his brother had lived. A number of the heathen were also assembled; among others was the leader of the party who murdered Mr. and Mrs. Gordon. He is an impudent, bad-looking fellow; if he had had any feeling of shame at all he would have kept away. Mr. Ella, however, took him in hand, and through Mana, who understands Samoan, gave him a very solemn talking-to on the sinfulness of his conduct, such as he had never heard since his hands were dyed with martyrs' blood. Mana, we were very sorry to see, was in very poor health. We gave instructions for the building of a house for a missionary on the site of Mr. Gordon's first house. We felt satisfied that, at present, no danger is to be apprehended in settling a missionary. . . . I feel certain that the prospects of the Mission were never so encouraging as at present. Others fear no danger; why should missionaries? Mr. Henry, the proprietor of the sandal-wood establishment at Dillon's Bay, had left his wife, with six children, the youngest only three months old, and gone to Sydney with the prospect of being absent for three or four months. Mrs. Henry evinced no anxiety about her situation, although she had only two white men living on the establishment. Moreover, I always considered Erromanga as a more healthy island than Aneityum. Mr. Henry and his family lived several years on Aneityum. I found, however, that both Mrs. Henry and the children looked much more healthy and robust than ever I had seen them on Aneityum. Mrs. Henry was very kind to all on board, and gave a donation of two pounds to the funds of the ship. The precious seed that has been sown in tears and watered with blood is beginning to spring up; the prayers of God's people are being

heard; and, doubtless, the harvest will be great and the final result glorious."

In a postscript to this letter, dated 11th August, Mr. Inglis said: "I may just add that on Wednesday, the 3rd inst., the *Dayspring* sailed from Aneityum, visited Erromanga, Efaté and Tanna, and returned to this island on the 9th, having had remarkably favourable winds both going and returning. Mr. Gordon received a most cordial welcome from the Christian natives of Erromanga."

Mr. Copeland, who was present at Mr. Gordon's settlement, wrote that "he soon had his hands full of work". There was his house to be built; when it was completed, one end was used for a school and the other for his own dwelling-house. He had previously spent so much time in a careful study of the language that "from the very day of his settlement he was able to do something at teaching, and preaching, and superintending the work". He had one Aneityumese teacher to help him, and from the first he conducted an afternoon school for young men who had already been under training. Mr. Copeland, in April, 1865, wrote: "Mr. Gordon generally conducts the religious services on Sabbaths at Dillon's Bay, where between one hundred and two hundred attend. Natives are appointed to the out-stations, three or four in number. Over two hundred are professedly Christian on Erromanga, and a few have been baptised. The work here has its dark and its bright aspects. The heathen natives are not only cruel, but treacherous. Still we must rejoice to see the field again occupied by a missionary amid circumstances, on the whole, encouraging. . . . Let us hope that the *last martyrs* of Erromanga have fallen, and that the greatest obstacles have already been overcome."

In 1867, the Rev. James Macnair and Mrs. Macnair,

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from Scotland, but supported by the Nova-Scotian Church, joined Mr. Gordon on Erromanga. Not long after their arrival, Mr. Gordon gave up his station at Dillon's Bay to Mr. Macnair, and opened up a new one on the north-east of the island at Potnuma or Portinia Bay. It was while he was still alone at Dillon's Bay that I paid my first visit to Erromanga, as narrated in the end of last chapter. We anchored in the bay about ten o'clock on a Sunday morning, and not long afterwards Mr. Gordon came off in his whale-boat. Captain Fraser persuaded him to stay on board to dinner. Afterwards I went on shore with Mr. Gordon, and to the afternoon service. The church was a little distance up the valley, and that day it was well filled. I can remember the very tune —"Coronation"—that they sang to one of the hymns. My first impression of both place and people was disappointing. I thought to myself, Dillon's Bay is certainly very pretty, but *very, very gloomy*, and the people are as *black*, as *ugly* and as *dirty* as they can be. Some of them were naked and painted, and nearly all carried bow and arrows. I stayed on shore that night with Mr. Gordon. He sat up writing the whole night, and, when I woke in the morning after a good sleep, I found my host busy making porridge for our breakfast. As a rule, he had fairly good native helpers, though they could not be depended on for much help; at that time he seemed to have almost no help. He managed wonderfully well, but must have often found it hard, as he did on this morning, when he confessed to me that "there is nothing like *petticoats* in a house to make things comfortable".

Our breakfast being over, I suggested visiting Mount Gordon. He objected, thinking it hardly safe, but seeing I was determined to go, sent Netai, a native, with me. An Aneityumese teacher followed us; so I



had a good escort. Returning from the deeply interesting spot, I found poor Gordon down with fever. It seemed hard to leave him like that, but the *Dayspring* was to sail in the evening. However, he struggled up to say good-bye to us, and was wonderfully cheerful. He was a brave man, and the more I knew of him the more I loved him.

Though Mr. and Mrs. Macnair arrived at Aneityum in August, 1866, and were appointed to Erromanga soon afterwards, it was some time before they could proceed to their future home. The *John Williams* having to return to Sydney, disabled, it was arranged that the *Dayspring* should accompany her in case of danger (see chap. vi.). So that the Macnairs and other missionaries were obliged to wait at Aneityum for her return. Before the *Dayspring* appeared, so eager were they to begin work, that they took passage in a small trading vessel, and thus reached Erromanga.

Their first year on the island was a trying one; both of them suffered severely from fever and ague, and so the next rainy season was spent on Aneityum. The rest there and change improved their health, and they left on their return to Erromanga on the 1st of June, 1867. It was in this year that a fearful epidemic, resembling diphtheria, broke out on Erromanga and other islands, and Mr. and Mrs. Macnair and Mr. Gordon had much to try their faith in those dark days. The Synod was to meet at Aneityum in August, but Mr. Macnair thought that, in consequence of the trouble on the island, he and his wife should remain on Erromanga, while Mr. Gordon would attend the meeting. During his absence of four weeks the disease raged furiously, and Mr. Macnair wrote of Dillon's Bay, "This has been literally the *valley of the shadow of death*". "The sacred men,"<sup>1</sup> he said, "have no scruples in asserting, and

the people seem to have as little in believing, and acting on the common belief, that Christianity is very much the cause of their troubles and calamities." By the time that the *Dayspring* returned, the disease had died down somewhat, but later on, spread to every corner of the island, and all through that dreary time the Macnairs and Gordon did their utmost to fight against it. Many died before it at last exhausted itself.

In November of the same year Mr. Macnair wrote: "The path of duty seems now very plain. Mr. Gordon has resolved to go to Sydney this rainy season, and I have resolved to remain here. . . . The *Dayspring* made her appearance on the 15th, and in a few hours we were off in order to visit Cook's Bay. Next morning we came to anchor, probably near the very spot where Captain Cook anchored nearly a hundred years ago. . . . We were soon ashore at a village opposite the anchorage; and as we were able to speak to the people they very soon became friends. A messenger was despatched to Cook's Bay, which is on the other side of Traitor's Head, to see how matters stood there, and to bring a chief or two to the vessel in order to accompany me to their place on Monday. We then made off to leeward five miles or so, in order to see the chief of the district. We landed at a place called Unōva, near Potnuma Bay." Here Mr. Macnair met Lifu, the high chief of the district, who, he said, "being a *high*<sup>2</sup> chief, would at first speak to me only through a spokesman". The letter goes on thus: "We came to his place beside a little river and a fine boat harbour. Mrs. Macnair wished to see his lady, but we were told he had many; however, he kindly consented to introduce us to his female friends, but when he went into the house, behold! they were off to the plantation or somewhere out of sight. He then, of his own accord, wished us to remain with him, and

said he would protect us. I thanked him, and said, if he wished, he could come with us to see the *Dayspring*, and that I would return with him on the morrow, the Sabbath, and have reading and prayer with his people. He consented at once; leaving his bow and arrows in the house, and taking his seat beside me in the boat along with his speaker, we were soon off. . . . He admired the *Dayspring* exceedingly, and was quite delighted with the cabin. After landing him at the village opposite the *Dayspring*, we took the deputation from Cook's Bay on board, consisting of two petty chiefs, the teacher, and three or four others. The report as to the present state of Cook's Bay is not favourable. The people are at war, and it is very hard to tell when it may cease; a petty chief was killed the night before we reached here. They did not consider it very safe for me to go over; at least, they would not venture with me themselves by the short way; and as to the long roundabout, which they came by and intended to return by, it was, they affirmed, quite impossible for me to accomplish it with my shoes on. They thought it would be as well for me to stay with our friend Lifu, and I could visit them occasionally at Cook's Bay.

"The wind blowing strong on the Sabbath, we thought it would be as well to have a meeting with the people in the village opposite. We landed accordingly, and had a nice meeting with them among the rocks. . . . Early on Monday morning, we landed the Cook's Bay men, and took on board Lifu and his 'speaker'. We then set off for Unōva with a fine breeze of fair wind. Before leaving the *Dayspring*, the captain made him a present of a large axe and gave a large butcher's knife to the 'speaker'. In the boat we talked about many things; he declared his land was much better than that at Dillon's Bay, that the river at Potnuma was full of

large fish, and that *I was a brother of his*, to boot. His face, black by nature, was more so by art, so that I need not be too proud of the new relationship. Yet it is possible we may turn it to some account. On landing at Unōva we were met by a crowd of blacks; we went to see the chief's other place, himself leading the way. It is about a mile and a half from the first, and beside another small river. My object being to fix on a site for a station, Mr. Dawes, the mate, and myself came to the conclusion that Unōva, the landing place, would be a more suitable spot. We returned after seeing the chief's food and tobacco plantation. He gave my man, Yomot,<sup>3</sup> as many yams as he could take for himself, and carried a great big one himself for me. On arriving at Unōva we went over a piece of ground suitable for a station. I then sat on a stone, surrounded by a crowd of naked, painted savages, and wrote the following *famous* document in Erromangan, which, for your benefit, I shall translate into the Queen's English:—

“‘I, Lifu Nokilian, Chief, sell the piece of ground which we have just gone over here at Unōva, to Jakobo Macnair, Misi, for five hatchets, eleven butcher's knives, three pocket-knives, and a lot of beads.

X. His mark.

Witnesses—Richard Dawes, mate.

Unimpau Yomot.

At Unōva, Erromanga, 18<sup>th</sup> Nov., 1867.’

“Lifu asked when we should come. I said six months hence, which he considered long. In a few minutes we were off, the Chief following us into the water, waving his hands.”

Mr. Macnair was far from being a strong man; he

suffered often from various ailments during his short mission life ; yet, whenever able, he was eager and ready to be at work, and, as will be seen by the foregoing letter, even in the remoter districts of this large island. Potnuma, the district mentioned in the letter, was the place where Mr. Gordon settled on leaving Dillon's Bay, and where he met his death. Though their first year had been a peculiarly trying one to Mr. and Mrs. Macnair, the two succeeding ones were brighter. Many of the surrounding heathen became friendly, and from amongst the professing Christians who were under training, several became members of the Church. At the beginning of 1870, Mr. Macnair became ill, though at first the trouble did not seem serious. He was able to attend the annual meeting of Synod in June, and there it was arranged that he should go in the *Dayspring* in July to Auckland and Rarotonga, in the hope that the long sea-voyage would do him good.

He had not been home on Erromanga more than a fortnight when the end came, early on a Saturday morning, the 15th of July, 1870. Mr. Inglis wrote that "a severe paroxysm" had come on the afternoon before. "He went in and lay down on the sofa. Mrs. Macnair asked him if he had much pain. He said 'No,' but added the trouble was his heart and a difficulty in breathing. The paroxysm passed off, and he was easier during the night ; but about daybreak another paroxysm came on. He began to retch, and, while Mrs. Macnair was holding him, she felt his head become heavy and a cold clamminess on his hands. She immediately sent for Mr. Smith, a white man, who had been there a few weeks commencing a whaling station, and who had formerly been second officer in the *Dayspring*. He came in an instant, but all was over. The *Dayspring*, with four of the missionaries on board, had left Erro-

manga the week before, no one suspecting that this good man's race was so nearly run." Mr. Inglis added: "Though his death was sudden and unexpected, yet he was found prepared; he knew in whom he had believed".

How sad for Mrs. Macnair in her sore trouble to be so far from friends, with just her infant daughter! Mr. Smith went to Tanna and Aniwa a few days after, and brought to Dillon's Bay Mr. Paton and Mr. Neilson, who helped Mrs. Macnair in making her arrangements for leaving. "Mr. and Mrs. Macnair were," said Mr. Inglis, "*particularly well liked*" by their own Erromangans and by the natives of Aneityum, and his death was "deeply lamented" by them all. His years on Erromanga, though few, were spent in earnest and heart whole consecration to his Master. The others who have followed them in the work here have had cause for deep gratitude when we have seen the results of the teachings, example and prayers of the noble Gordons and Macnairs during their life on "dark Erromanga".

Mrs. Macnair afterwards became the wife of the Rev. Dr. Turner,<sup>4</sup> of Samoa. After a long and worthy mission career on Samoa, she and her husband returned to England. Dr. Turner's death occurred in May, 1891. Mrs. Turner's present home is in Birkenhead. Her daughter, born on Erromanga, is the wife of Dr. Kerr Cross, of the Livingstonia Mission in Central Africa.

Mr. Gordon had for a long time been desirous of starting a mission on Santo. He had had two natives of that island with him for some time, and, with their help, had mastered one of the dialects of that large island. He had great aptitude for the learning of languages; his knowledge of Erromangan was perfect, and his translations almost without a mistake. He not only

understood the *enyau* dialect, which is known all over the island, but also two others—the *sorūng* and the *ura*, which are only understood by a few. All our translations are in the *enyau* language; the others I have never even attempted to learn; for it is better to try to establish only one language on each island, if we can. In 1869, he was able to carry out his wish with regard to Santo, and pitched his tent near the spot now occupied by the Rev. J. Noble Mackenzie's house. But Erromanga was to be his head station; and, after a few months, he returned again to Portinia Bay. That was his last visit to Santo.

No one can speak of Mr. Gordon's work as he could himself. I have before me two old and faded letters written by the martyr's hand, which are kindly lent to me by a friend of his and of our Mission, Mrs. Wark, of Bathurst, New South Wales. The letters give an insight into much of his daily work, and describe in detail the characters of a few of his helpers, principally young people and children; for they are written to the pupils of Miss Fraser, now Mrs. Wark, and it is with her permission I now publish them:—

“HAVANNAH HARBOUR,  
“EFATÉ, 9th November, 1869.

“MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,

“This is the seventh day since we dropped anchor here, and as I have, for once, more leisure than I desire, I sit down to write you a *long* letter. You remember that the first and last place in which I saw you was in the schoolroom, and it is to you *there* I now ask you to let me write: I mean to you all *collectively* and not *individually*. By doing the former I can write one long letter, and if I do the latter I can only write several short ones. I hope you may not be offended.

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with me for doing so, for I would not displease you for anything.

“I think I promised when I should write you again to tell you about some of the young people on Erromanga, and to mention some of their good qualities. This little epistle, then, will be something like tiny biographies. . . . But I may say, first, that there are very few children on Erromanga compared with the number on some other islands; and wherever missionaries go they like to see many children. We build our hopes upon the young people. There being very few little boys and girls on the island, their parents are fond of them and indulge them in every respect. They seldom correct them, and, when they do, it is in a wrong way and not from right motives. In this way, being allowed to do as they like, they grow up wayward, naughty and disobedient, and, never having been taught to exercise any control over themselves, grow up to be men and women who are passionate, revengeful and violent; and, being under the power of the devil, they fight and kill each other. I have often seen quite young children behaving very badly towards their mothers. Generally they have more dread of the fathers. But it is very provoking to see young boys and girls, when they get into a pet, as they often do, throw themselves down on the ground, cry and screech, and kick the ground, and make a great dust and ado, and their mother looking on instead of chastising them.

“There was a little boy that grew up on the Mission premises. He was the only child of his parents, and they used to indulge him in every way, till at last he paid no heed to his mother. I was observing her one day trying to persuade him to go home with her. She stood calling to him for nearly half an hour. One day I heard him screeching lustily just for the fun of it; and



I went to see what was the matter. I found him lying on his face on the floor of my cook-house, and with nothing the matter with him. I approached him unobserved, saying to myself, 'Now, my little lad, I'll give you something worth crying about,' and with a flat stick I gave him a few hard stripes, and you would have thought he would have brought the house down on our heads. *He was never before so much taken with surprise* ; but after a while became quiet, and was as docile as a lamb. He was for weeks afterwards a better boy, though he was shy of me, and used, especially in church, to give me some significant looks, as much as to say, 'You hard white-man, I have hard work in persuading myself that you did that for my good, though I'm none the worse for it'. I very rarely corrected a boy, for were I to do so, he would be off and leave me ; but sometimes I could not refrain from doing so, and used to tell their parents that it was very wrong to allow their children to do such things. . . .

"When I settled at Portinia Bay, I sent a man to ask permission of an inland and influential chief to do so. The chief's name was Potnilo, and he had been to Sydney once. Not wishing to see my messenger, he hid himself, and Netai came back disappointed. Potnilo's brother, who had been chief before him, had a son, a boy about ten years old, living with his uncle, whom, according to custom, he called 'father'.<sup>5</sup> That little boy's name was Novolu, and he followed Netai, my messenger, some distance on his way back, and told him he was much displeased with his father's conduct. He wished to follow Netai to my tent, but Netai forbade him, saying: 'Go home ; if you follow me, your father will hate me, and what is bad will thus become worse'. So he returned, but sent word to me to remain, and not to go to Santo. A day or two afterwards, I had an

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interview with Potnilo, at a place of meeting appointed by him, which was some distance from my tent. Several of his tribe accompanied him, and Novolu among the rest, my unseen, unknown young friend at court. He was a nice-looking, timid boy. Our business over, they all went their way, and we ours. Some months afterwards Potnilo paid me a visit; Novolu and a younger brother were with him. He consented to let the elder one remain with me, which the boy was quite willing to do.

“Not long afterwards, his father repented of what he had done; for he suspected that the boy was lost to heathenism, and, being of a patriarchal family, none of whom had embraced the Gospel, he felt that he had committed a great mistake. From time to time attempts were made to remove him, but in vain. One time in particular his father appointed a day—a feast day—on which, without fail, the boy must make his appearance. Novolu came to consult me about it. He said he would be away three days. I asked him what he would do if they should tie him up and speak evil of the Word of God to persuade him from taking up with it, and he told me that as regarded these things he was fully minded to return. One day after, I told Netai of our conversation, and said he was gone for three days. ‘*Three days!*’ he exclaimed; ‘you’ll not see him again.’

“‘Oh, yes,’ said I; ‘I think he will come back.’

“‘Well, I don’t think so,’ said he.

“One morning, at daylight, Netai heard some one outside our house, and said, ‘Who is there?’—‘I.’ ‘Is that you, Novolu?’—‘Yes.’ ‘Where have you come from?’—‘I have run away; they were speaking evil of Christianity, and had me a prisoner; but I watched my chance and ran.’ His mother,<sup>5</sup> his uncle’s wife, was privy to it, and he left while she was preparing some

food for him ; for he knew that if he waited till daybreak they would detain him forcibly. . . . His mother I have not yet seen, but I have often been secretly aided and warned of impending danger by women. On opening the door that morning, the first one I saw was Novolu. Some time afterward I made him my cook, from necessity rather than choice. One day he broke a wash-hand basin ; I heard the natives calling and laughing at him about it outside, and knew that something had occurred. One boy in ten only would have done, under the circumstances, what Novolu did : he came and told me what had happened. He soon began to learn to read and then to pray, and he gives promise of being a good and useful man, and that he may become such you will pray, I am sure ; will you not ? He has been with me a year now, and is growing very fast. He was the only one I took with me to Santo, five months ago. God has taken good care of us ever since, for which I am very thankful. Had anything happened to him, had I now been going back without him, it would injure me very much ; for, as I left Erromanga as the Israelites left Egypt, that is, in haste, I had not time to ask his friends' leave, but took him away without it. A nasty old man—Netai's father, too—induced some heathen men to detain him by force, just as I was launching my boat to go on board. Hearing some one cry, I looked round, and saw two men dragging him off to the bush from the shore, he struggling in vain to get away. There were many collected on the shore that morning. I made a rush at the two who had hold of Novolu, and, just as I got up to them, they let him go. I was very angry at them. It did this much good, however, that it showed them he was going away willingly and not merely at my instance. For two reasons I felt uneasy about taking him. One was that I was aware some Erro-

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mangans had killed some natives of Santo a few years ago—killed them on their own island. Another was on account of sickness. While on our way back, the other day, we called at an island called Tongoa. Novolu wished to go to the shore with us and I consented, not knowing that a month or two ago a native of that island had been killed on Erromanga; they would, perhaps, have killed him in revenge. He is a good trader. I gave him a few things to buy some curiosities on Santo to take home with him; he bought some earthenware, such as the Santo people make, and other things.<sup>6</sup> I told him, on seeing his stock, that I thought he was driving hard bargains. Some of the men of the vessel used to give him 'trade' articles with which to buy bows and arrows, spears and clubs, and the like, for them; for natives buy more cheaply from each other than we can from them.

"Novolu, though a little boy, has a wife—a little girl of Cook's Bay. They were betrothed as children, after the native fashion. One day he asked me if he should give her up, and I told him to let the bargain stand. If they choose hereafter to take her from him, well and good. It is likely they may do so. And why? I can show you that by introducing another boy to your notice, and telling what happened to him. He, too, is a chief's son—the son of the chief under whom the first missionaries were settled in Dillon's Bay.

"Naling was quite a little boy when I settled there, but though young he soon carried a gun, and, by his desire to take part in the war in progress for two years, he used to give me so much trouble that I had to threaten him with expulsion. For a long time I had not a very good opinion of him, but he improved greatly upon acquaintance. The day I left Dillon's Bay for the last time, a chief two miles up the river died. He was the

last of a line of high chiefs, and his death was much deprecated by his people. I went to see him a while before he died, though he was an enemy of Christianity, and died without hope. On his death, the chieftainship was offered Naling on condition that he renounced his profession of Christianity. This was a tempting offer for a boy, but he said that he had pledged his word to me to stand by the Christian cause and he intended to do so. He was satisfied with his choice. So all their efforts to shake his constancy were unavailing. That was a noble stand for a boy to take. But this bright picture has since been deeply shaded.

"About six months after my departure, I heard of his being over at Cook's Bay to a feast; and, what was somewhat singular, he had not called to see me. I was told that undue pressure had been brought to bear upon him, that, if he had refused to go and comply with the heathen customs of the island, he would have had his wife—a little girl that I used to see at a preaching-station near Bunkil—taken from him. On Erromanga there are not so many women as men, and every one—boys as well as men—is ambitious of having a wife. So you see how differently those two boys acted, and that, while Naling resisted temptation in one form, he fell into it in another, and that what he stumbled at Novolu was ready and able to step over. And this is not all. One sin committed makes room for the commission of another. Naling went to the feast without leave, and when he came back, on being questioned about his inconsistency, he told a lie. He said a man on the mission premises induced him to go, and it is very likely they would have a laugh over this among themselves. What need we have to dread the taking of the first wrong step, and to pray 'Lead us not into temptation'!

"I will close my letter by giving you some account

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of Naling's sister, a young woman older than himself. When a little girl, she was bought—and that is the proper term—by a chief at Portinia Bay, a man old enough to be her father. After remaining a while with her owner, she ran away, and made her way back to Dillon's Bay, which was a clever feat in a country where there is no highway. On my settlement in Dillon's Bay, I found her there, a young girl, but in four years she grew up and looked upon me as her guardian, though she was living with a relative who was one of my best young men. He died, and Naling became her sole protector. She was in a great way on learning that I was going to leave the island. One day she came crying into my study, and said that the heathen were plotting to carry her off and deliver her up to him whom she had run away from when a little child; that I was going away, and that she did not know of any one else who had either the will or the ability to protect her; that she had spoken to Naling, and got no satisfaction. What made that place an asylum for her was the fact that her owner could not visit the western side of the island. I felt deeply for her, poor creature, and said that I would have a talk with Naling on the subject. I found that he was willing to use his influence to prevent her being given up to the heathen. She received the information, poor thing, with mingled feelings of hope and distrust.

"*20th November.*—Since writing the foregoing, Novolu and I have returned to the spot we left four months ago, and glad indeed and thankful to God for His goodness to us-ward, and to those the few whom we left behind us here. But some sad tidings awaited us both. I said to him the second morning after we got back: 'You can go now and see your father and friends'. But

he was unwilling to go, as he had learned that his 'father'—his uncle, rather—had, during his absence, sold his two sisters, young girls; he is angry about it, and thinks he will have nothing more to do with him. His mother came next day to see him, and to persuade him to go with her and remain ten months, make a feast, get some rings and boars' tusks, and thus become a *big* chief. He does not, however, seem to care much about their inducements. His mother said she and his sisters also cried greatly and mourned for him as for one dead, which I believe they did. But his uncle has done very wickedly in selling his sisters, and the worst of it is—to *men old enough to be their grandfathers*. And what was got for each? A ring<sup>7</sup>—an image of the moon, which is the symbol of the chief's power, and which is coveted more than anything else. These two unhappy young girls have been sold to old men residing far away, and made miserable for ever. One of them, it is said, climbed a tree for the purpose of casting herself down, but, after being in the tree a long time, she was rescued. . . . How thankful you should be that you cannot be sacrificed for money as these poor, defenceless little girls have been! True are the words of God, as written by Paul—the heathen are devoid of 'natural affection'.

"I must now close this letter without referring to the notes that I received from some of you. The fact is that I have only just had the pleasure of reading them, as they were left behind, unopened, when I went to Santo. . . . You all remind me that you have been keeping your promise made to Dr. Moon, and I am glad of that. You will see that I, and we all here, need your prayers, and it is very encouraging to have the assurance that we are deriving benefit from them. Pray on.

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Pray for us. 'Prayer moves the hand that moves the world.' With many thanks and best wishes,

"I remain,

"Yours very sincerely,

"J. D. GORDON."

The next letter was written at—

"PORTINIA BAY,

"ERROMANGA, *2nd December, 1870.*

. . . After acknowledging letters from his "young friends" in Sydney, he says: "To each and all of you I am largely indebted for all the kind interest you take in one whom you call the 'Children's Missionary'. I wish I were worthy of being such. . . . I did not get to Santo this year, and why, I need not begin to tell you. Something or somebody hindered, and, if somebody, I hope it was not Satan. I feel sure the people of Santo must think and speak hardly of me, but that would be a small matter, if it could be disassociated from the interests of the Gospel, which must suffer under so much mismanagement. . . . A short time after I had decided upon not going to Santo this year, Mr. Macnair died. This, of which you must have heard with regret some months ago, occurred in July. Since that, my time has been divided between this place and Dillon's Bay, and I have recently taken up another place, Cook's Bay. . . . I used to meet the children at noon, on Sabbath, between the forenoon and afternoon services. There were a good many of them, eighteen or twenty sometimes, but several were too small to learn anything at all. They would not try even to learn to sing 'Happy Land'. Still it was pleasant to meet them, and I felt sorry when the time came for my leaving them. Two of these were little girls, and delicate. They used to



come down the river, sometimes alone. After each had got one of the dresses made by you, one day after the class was dismissed, one of them came up to me, pointed to her foot, saying it was sore—which it was—and she was lame; then with as pleasant an appearance and persuasive voice as possible, she said: ‘*Namé* (that is, “mamma”) is very cold; she would like a garment’. It would have been impossible to refuse; so I said I would see her in the morning, which I did, and she got what she wanted. The begging propensity is pretty strong in them however, and she soon asked for an additional dress for herself, but I thought that would be ‘*too much for a little canoe*’. However, they were regular attenders up to the time that I left, nearly a month ago, though I do not know that they learned anything. There was one little girl, quite a little one, when I first came to the island, but now a little maid, and two boys who learned something, and these were all that I could discover. You cannot conceive how dull and dark some of their minds are, both young and old. The little girl was my cook and house-maid—tent-maid I ought to say. She has two names: one is Undawiung, and the other Nampunia.

“One little boy died, Urumunu, after a few days’ illness. He too was with me from the time of my first settlement in Dillon’s Bay. He was always a weakly, lame child, but a very smart and pleasant boy. He was the best scholar, though quite a young boy, and the most obedient. He used to pray, even in my presence, before I left them three years ago. He used to sing nicely, and his sweet, though shrill, little voice was on the Sabbath day quite distinguishable from the others. He suffered greatly before his death, and I could do nothing for him to relieve him. The medicines appeared to take no effect. I was shocked at his death; it was

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so sudden, for I was with him two hours before and had so little thought that he would die that I did not even ask him if he were afraid to die. for I do not like to speak to them about death unless I believe they cannot recover. And so, when Urimu was taken, I lost my favourite boy of all the boys on the island with whom I am acquainted. How much happier our lot would be if all, young and old, were as well-behaved and obedient as was that little boy! . . . However, there are some promising boys now, if they continue so. But it is so hard to get them removed beyond the influence of their heathen friends. Indeed, rarely can that be effected. I only know of three or four instances. But there may be more given in answer to your prayers if you persevere. *We need your prayers*, I assure you, for many are they who fight against us. Let us remember Him who said, and still says to us: 'Without Me ye can do nothing'. That is absolutely true.

"You told me in your letters that you were afraid I would be tired of reading them, they were so many. Now it is my turn to say I fear you will weary of mine, it is so long and there is so little in it after all. Anyhow, *let it here take ending*. My benediction is worth nothing, else I would give it you. 'The blessing of the Lord maketh rich and addeth no sorrow therewith.' Good-bye for the present.

"Yours very sincerely,

"J. D. GORDON."

## CHAPTER VIII.

1869-1872—*Continued.*

THE visit to Santo mentioned by Mr. Gordon in the first of the foregoing letters to his young friends proved to be the last that he ever paid to that island, though for its evangelisation his heart yearned with all the intensity of his nature. His second letter, written at Potnuma, bears testimony to the deep and abiding interest he took in Santo and its people, and how disappointed he was when the way was not open for continuing his visits and teachings. A number of young people had gathered round him, and they had evidently become attached to him, for, years after, when missionary deputations visited that particular part of Santo, a number of natives, principally young people, anxiously inquired when their own tall missionary would come back to them as he had promised to do. Mr. Milne, referring to a visit he had made there in company with Mr. Inglis, wrote to me: "What a splendid place this is for a missionary! I think it is the finest in the group, and what an interesting people! There is nothing to prevent a man being settled here at once."

The last year of Mr. Gordon's life on Erromanga was devoted largely to the translating of portions of the Gospels and revising his own and his brother's translations. The book of Genesis was printed in Sydney in 1867, and the Gospel of Matthew in London, by the British and Foreign Bible Society, at a later date. He

visited most of the districts near his station on foot, some of the roads being too rough for his horse; but he was able to travel to Cook's Bay on horseback. This he frequently did, and had his tent pitched on a raised, rough floor, inside a *siman-lo*<sup>1</sup> or 'feasting-house'. Though they were all heathens, the high chiefs and important people of that district were friendly to Mr. Gordon, and were roused to indignation when they heard of his tragic death. At Ifwa, upon one occasion when he was visiting round the island in his boat, he and his crew were within an inch of being massacred. The chief's influence over his people alone prevented them from dragging up the boat as soon as it touched the shore and tomahawking all on board. Out of resentment, they snatched a fine double-barrelled gun from Sempint, one of the crew, and ran off with it. Sempint never recovered his gun, and often, when the other members of the crew would be describing to me their escape from a cruel death, he would break in with: "But think of my loss—the loss of my fine new gun. Oh! my beloved gun!" The lives of his missionary and of all in the boat that day, including his own, were evidently a trifle compared with the loss of his gun. On a previous visit to Ifwa, Mr. Gordon had shared his scanty dinner with the chief, had conversed pleasantly and respectfully with him, and had, on leaving, given him a small present. It was this simple act of kindness that now saved his life and that of all with him.<sup>2</sup>

During the first part of his stay at Potnuma, a great cave was used as a place for service, but Mr. Gordon was soon able to build a church of concrete walls and thatched roof, and also his own dwelling-house. The young people from distant villages who had come for instruction soon learned to read, and thus to "open the door," or "*the entrance of the way*," as they express

it, "into God's sacred Book". Their very eagerness to receive this instruction which was opening their eyes to the priceless blessings of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour, and causing them to turn with loathing from the reign of cruelty, ignorance and shame on every hand, only the more enraged the heathen against the Gospel and the young converts, and especially against the missionary, whom they regarded as the *noatnin*, 'root,' of the whole matter. They resolved that he should pay the penalty with his life. By his death this new religion would be *for ever* crushed on their island. Those in distant lands who had sent missionaries again and again to Erromanga would surely not be mad enough to send a *tampenum*, 'successor,' to this man.

And now the end was not far off. James Gordon's death removed from the little band of as devoted and sincere Christians as it has ever been my lot to know, their dearest earthly friend, or, as they themselves expressed it, "it had put out their *last light*". It added another name to the long roll of God's martyrs, and while it rent the heart of Christendom afresh, it increased, if possible, the undying interest in Erromanga and its unhappy people. Gladly would I pass over the closing scene, so heart-rending and mysterious does it all seem. I have so often been at the spot where Gordon fell and bled to death, and have stood still, as upon holy ground, by his lonely grave, with the most solemn feelings that have ever wrung my heart. Had he not toiled and prayed and suffered and given up at last his very *life* for Erromanga?

On Thursday morning, 7th March, 1872, all the strong young men and lads had gone to cut poles to fence the burying ground, which was about half a mile up the valley. Netai, a true and able friend, had, just a fortnight before, been settled as a teacher beyond Traitor's Head

and within Cook's Bay. Only two lame men and one boy were with Mr. Gordon at the Mission station. But this was nothing unusual. Frequently there are so few native helpers, especially in the early years of one's work, that when anything requiring more than one workman is to be done, the missionary is often obliged to send *all* his available help to do that work. This is not desirable, but we have all had to do it. On this occasion, the enemy knew all this, the murderer and his accomplice lived quite near, and the plot having been made two months before by several high chiefs in different parts of the island, it only remained for them to watch their chance.

All the forenoon of the fatal day, Mr. Gordon was busy revising his brother's translation of the Acts of the Apostles, assisted by his able and faithful pundit,<sup>3</sup> Soso. He had reached the middle of the seventh chapter, where the narrative of the stoning of Stephen occurs; Soso afterwards gave me the manuscript, and the corrections *in new ink* were easily traced so far, and *ended there*. About midday Nerimpau, the murderer, and his accomplice, Naré, appeared on the verandah of the Mission-house. Mr. Gordon and Soso both saw the men, for only the glass door, or French window, separated them. They asked for empty bottles, which natives like to get for holding their drinking-water in preference to their long bamboo bottles<sup>4</sup> or cocoanut-shells. Mr. Gordon suspected nothing, and, asking Soso to look over once more their corrections, rose and gave the men what they wanted. He then gave some rice to Nōvōlū Naiyūp, the young lad who was his cook, and told him to boil it for his dinner. As the two men were still hanging about and talking to him, he sat down on the verandah in his arm-chair—the same that I had seen him making on board the *Dayspring* in the autumn of 1863, while

we were on our way to the Cape. Naré stood on the ground *facing* him, and Nerimpau by his side *on* the verandah. Naré engaged Mr. Gordon in conversation, and Nerimpau, seeing his opportunity, instantly plunged his tomahawk into his victim's face. The poor man sprang to his feet, and, pushing open the glass door leading into his study, fell heavily upon the floor. Sōsō, who had left the manuscript lying on the floor, where he had been sitting, and had gone into the dining-room, heard the thud when Mr. Gordon fell. On entering, he found him lying on his face, the blood rushing from a fearful gash in his side-face and from his mouth. He made an attempt to turn upon his back, his lips moved, Soso thought in prayer, and then with one long-drawn deep gasp his spirit returned to the God who gave it and to the Saviour whom he had so faithfully loved. "What are these which are arrayed in white robes, and whence came they?"

Novolu Naiyup, the young cook, saw the awful deed from where he was working; he afterwards told us that Nerimpau tried to prevent Mr. Gordon from entering his study, but, failing in that, he followed him in and pulled the tomahawk from the face of his victim. So deep had the blow fallen that Mr. Gordon carried the fatal axe sticking in his skull as he rushed to his room. How horrid the callousness of the native who, not content with his foul murder, made sure of taking his axe away with him. They were determined to kill him, for a native, an enemy, had been some time lying in the kitchen professedly asleep. If Nerimpau and Naré failed, he was to kill the missionary; should he also fail, yet another man was concealed on the bank of the river, where they knew Mr. Gordon would be going to bathe in the afternoon. As soon as the murder was committed and Nerimpau had secured his weapon, the two

men fled down the path, the 'sleeping' foe in the kitchen closely following.

Mr. Gordon had fallen with his face upon his manuscript, and, when he was moved, it was found that that page—his last writing—was stained with his life-blood. Soso in great grief sent the young lad Novolu to call the men from their work, and as soon as possible a messenger was sent to Netai. He, poor fellow, on hearing the news, ran the whole distance from Cook's Bay, over the rocky mountain paths.<sup>5</sup> Together they made a rude coffin for their loved missionary, and, in bitter grief, buried him that same evening in a spot which Mr. Gordon had pointed out for his burial, should his death occur.

I should like to insert here the following letter written to me lately by Rev. Dr. Paton, who knew well and esteemed the martyred Gordons, and can speak with knowledge of their work.

• ANIWA, 23rd June, 1899.

"DEAR MR. ROBERTSON,

"In replying to yours, I may say that I cannot find a letter of the martyrs of Erromanga in my possession. All from George N. Gordon were lost, with all else I possessed except my pocket Bible, when I had to escape from Tanna.<sup>6</sup> He and his wife were pious, able, consecrated missionaries, who had to submit to much self-denial and hardship in laying the foundations of the Lord's work on *blood-stained Erromanga*. They were my chief friends, and our Christian intercourse was precious. Mrs. Gordon was an excellent woman, and a great comfort and help to her husband in all their work and trials, in all their dangers resignedly resting on Jesus and encouraging him, seemingly without fear.

"The Rev. Joseph Copeland and I spent a Saturday



and Sabbath with them on Erromanga shortly before their deaths. We had taken to them a harmonium in the *John Knox*, our first mission schooner. Mrs. Gordon and the natives were delighted, as she taught them with it to sing hymns. They had a number of young men and women, who had become Christians, living with them or near them. The Sabbath was indeed one spent with Jesus and His dear servants. The savages, to stop the extending of the Lord's work there, had resolved to murder the missionaries. . . . Almost together they received their martyr-crowns, and entered into the joy of their Lord in the glory of Heaven. The young men . . . laid their remains in the grave, over which weeping and wailing they vowed, 'We will conquer Erromanga for Jesus, or die as our missionaries have died in the effort'. After this, in the missionary's boat, they came to me on Tanna, and in great sorrow informed me of the, to them, great loss of their missionary and his wife. Having got such advice as they needed, they returned to carry out their vow.

"James Gordon, a brother of the martyred man, then a student in Canada, resolved to go to Erromanga, and, if possible, convert to the service of our God the murderers of his brother and sister. He came out with the first *Dayspring*, and claimed the same friendship I had had with his brother, which was given, and continued unbroken till his death. He also was a heavenly minded, consecrated missionary, full of burning zeal for the conversion and eternal salvation of the savages of Erromanga. His brother's few converts received him with great joy, and faithfully stood by him. He had constituted a church among them, and was having success, when the Rev. James and Mrs. Macnair joined our Mission and cast in their lot with Mr. Gordon on Erromanga. In his noble, self-denying spirit, Mr. Gordon

gave them his house and church at Dillon's Bay, and, accompanied by a few of his young men and women, he went to Portinia Bay, on the opposite side of the island, to begin a new station. Mr. Macnair died after a short period of devoted labour, when Mr. Gordon had to take charge of and work both stations. I accompanied Mr. Gordon, and helped him to pitch his tent on Santo, where he wished also to preach the Gospel. To stop God's work, the savages of Erromanga resolved to murder him as they had done to his brother. . . . On my next visit Mr. Gordon was at Dillon's Bay, and we spent our time in consultation and prayer, fearing we should not meet again, as his dangers and ours appeared about equal. We urged him much to leave with us, but he would not; trusting God, he felt it to be his duty to remain. On our leaving, he accompanied me to the boat. Our hearts were too full then for speaking, but, looking earnestly at each other, we said good-bye. I jumped into the boat, and, hat in hand, he sat down on the stones on the shore, and, when we were losing sight of each other, he rose, waved his last farewell, and returned to his house. Soon after this, when at Portinia Bay, he was revising the translation of Stephen's martyrdom. He had reached the words, 'Lord Jesus receive my spirit, and lay not this sin to their charge,' when he, too, fell asleep. . . . In bitter grief and weeping over their loss the Christian natives laid his body in a grave by the sea-shore, and over it renewed the vow to conquer Erromanga for Jesus. They again came to me in the missionary's boat, and, on Aniwa, in agony told me of their loss. After conversation, prayer and advice, in a few days they returned to fulfil their vow like true Christian heroes. You know better than I how, through your dear wife, yourself and these men, that vow has

been redeemed, and that Erromanga is now a Christian island, for which we all praise our dear Lord Jesus.

"The noble Gordons and Macnairs were most excellent missionaries, as well as my dear fellow-labourers in the darkest days of our Mission. Now they all have their reward with Jesus in the glory and joys of heaven. May we all at last meet there as His redeemed.

"Yours faithfully,

"JOHN G. PATON."

Dr. Paton speaks of the young men going to Aniwa in the mission-boat. Sōsō sent by them a letter, which, translated by the Rev. Peter Milne, of Nguna, reads as follows:—

"I am Soso. Love to you, Misi Paton. Why this word of mine to you? Because the Erromangans have killed Misi Gordon, and he is not here now. A man named Nerimpau struck Misi in the month of March, the 7th day, Thursday. There was one servant with Nerimpau, named Naré. He (Nerimpau) cut his forehead with a tomahawk one time only, and I buried him there at Potnuma, according to the word which he had spoken, namely: 'If I die, bury ye me here; afterwards send word to the missionaries'; and I did so. And I assembled the young men, and the children and the women, and remained there on Friday and Saturday and Sunday. I saw Naling and part of the young men from Dillon's Bay. The carpenter sent them to bring us from Potnuma. And I asked them about the goods and the house; and they thought that we should leave them. Accordingly, on Monday we made ready. I took the money, and the books which he made with his hand (MSS.) in the English, Erromangan, and Espiritu-Santo languages, and part of the clothes and the knives;

I have them here, and the portraits are in my house at Unpotindi (Cook's Bay); the chiefs there keep them. And on Tuesday I took the young men, and the children and the women—forty-three in all—from that village, and lay in the bush; and on Wednesday we went in haste to Umbongkora (Dillon's Bay), and remained there on Thursday. On Friday, nine young men returned to Rovilian, and killed three men and one woman—these were four; they were able to smite more, but the carpenter forbade it. The heathen took all the goods from the house, and burned the holy books, and broke down the house. Thus do the wicked Erromangans treat the children of God; and this is the only thought of the men here—they burn the Word of Jehovah, and think it dead. This man, Nerimpau, his child died; he hated and killed Misi.”<sup>7</sup>

Thus far the faithful Soso's short account. I am now going to give *Yomot's* detailed story of that tragic time. He has often and often given it, and how I wish I could present a picture of him as he tells it! now sitting calmly, now springing to his feet, his beautiful dark eyes blazing, his whole body swaying with excitement, as he recalls the past. He goes through every motion, and by his interest and realistic description carries *us*, too, away back to the time when Erromanga was yet *dark* Erromanga. This is what he told me.

#### YOMOT'S<sup>8</sup> STORY.

“When Mr. Gordon came to Potnuma I was living quite near him, and was one of the young men who helped him with his work. But we were very few; the heathen would not allow their boys to come to the ‘Misi,’ and those who did venture of their own accord were cruelly used by the angry people, who used to

come and drag them away; some were even killed and eaten. Those were dreadful days; when the tribes fought, those that were overcome were doomed to the awful death. 'Misi,' I have seen them, the poor victims, still living and in writhing agony, bound, as we bind pigs, to a long pole, and carried along by a band of wild, painted savages, yelling their exultant war-cry. And they were not then, as now, few in number; the hills, the valleys, every bay, every headland teemed with people. We would be working in our plantations, or perhaps sitting, resting, when we would hear the heavy tramp of hurried feet and the war-cry. Two men would rush past us, the pole they bore swaying with the weight of the poor man beneath it; more would dash past still, with their loud *whoop, whoop, whoop!* that made the very hills ring with the echo, one man after another being rushed on to his doom. It was a sickening sight, but we were used to it and felt it not as we should now.

"Mr. Gordon was surrounded by various tribes of hostile people, only the chiefs of Cook's Bay being friendly. When he first landed at Potnuma, his tent was pitched for a dwelling-place, and it was not long before the *Dayspring* returned with Mr. Paton on board, and our Misi left us to go to Santo. Novolu Navorem, a young boy who was living with him, asked to go too, and Mr. Gordon wished to take him that he might help him, cook for him, and assist him, too, in learning the Erromangan language. But the boy's friends were angry. 'He shall not go!' they said, and, when the boat came to the shore, they gathered round it. As Novolou went to step into the boat, the men caught hold of him; he struggled, but they pulled him out, and dragged him away. Mr. Gordon rushed after them, pushed them all aside, for he was a big powerful man, lifted the boy right into the boat, then jumped in

himself, and they were off. He was not easily turned aside from his purpose. When he returned from Santo, he built his house at Potnuma, and the great cave there was made into a church.

“After he had been many months teaching us and translating the ‘word,’ visiting the people round about, and striving to change their heathen hearts, one day he called us all: ‘Come, *oviarep*, ‘young men, boys,’ he said, ‘let us go to Ifwa, where I have never been’. So we started in the *Yarra-Yarra*,<sup>9</sup> but soon I was so ill that Mr. Gordon said to me, ‘You go back, Yomot, and look after my house’. Soon after I returned to Potnuma, the mother of Navusia, my wife, took ill, and we crossed over the hills to see her. They said—the Misi and those who went with him—that I should not have done this, that my place was on the Mission-grounds. But I was young and headstrong, and had not looked at my conduct in that light. Netai, who was my ‘own brother,’<sup>10</sup> was very angry, and forbade me to return to them. Now, in my heart I knew that the Misi had no more faithful friend than I, but when Netai said this to me I replied: ‘Let it be so; *you* keep me away; go you back to your land, and I will stop here where I am a stranger’. So the time went by and I lived at Umbongkora (Dillon’s Bay), and worked for Smith by the river, on the south side. One day I went far up the valley in search of bread-fruit, and was plucking some, when I thought I heard some one calling me. ‘Who is there?’ I replied, and I had scarcely spoken when I saw, hurrying down the mountain track, Novolu Naimpium, looking frightened and troubled. ‘Yomot, Yomot!’ he called to me, ‘*oveteme utai Misi Gordon!*’ ‘the people have killed Mr. Gordon!’ Oh, what evil news was this to me! My Misi, whom I loved in spite of all my hastiness, cut down *and by my own people*. My

heart was heavy, and for many days we wept for him who had been taken from us. I was all the time restless and troubled; for, although I told no one of my feelings, right down in my heart was the longing for revenge against the cruel people who had so used us. Was it wrong, Misi? What would *you* have done if your friend had been deceived and killed by lying men? How would *you* have felt if your 'brother' had been slain by cruel hands, even though the murderer were of your own land? *Misi, I was just hungry for them.* But I thought, 'What am I to do? Here am I in this strange land, Umbongkora; these people are not my people; I am alone, and, if I do anything rash, strangers are all around, and I shall be powerless.' They suspected me, and said, 'What are you thinking of? why is it you go about as if you were everybody's enemy?' Naling, the chief of Umbongkora, he, too, wished revenge, and we spoke of killing that old *nareki sat*, 'wicked fellow,' Auwi-auwi, Woris Nangeri, and Narai, who had always been our enemy, and who had attempted the death of Mr. Gordon for many months. But Narai, who was at Sufa, heard of our intention, and kept away. A canoe passed us with two men who were going to take him to a *nisekar*, 'feast'.<sup>11</sup> I seized my gun. 'Come, let us kill these wretches,' I said. Naling said that *he* would fire. I told him that if he would do it, to see that his aim was sure and not to let them go. But the canoe kept far too far away, and they escaped us—those two who were Narai's friends. Naling had far better have let *me* shoot them.<sup>12</sup>

"On a Saturday we left Umbongkora—I, and the boys, and Naling, and Naimpium; that night we lay in the bush, and on Sunday we reached Potnuma, and saw the men of Lovès, Netai, and his brothers Lifu and Novolu Teruvat. Our faces were sad when we met,

for our Misi had been killed. Soso then told us to make ready to leave that land, and on Monday some of us, who were strong, with the children, the old people, the women and those who were weak left in the *Yarra-Yarra* to go round to Umbongkora. We were too many, and, the boat beginning to sink, we returned in haste to the shore. We lay on Tuesday night at Umpon-pohur, in the hills, and the next day we reached Umbongkora. We at once made a stockade round the Mission-house, where we all gathered for safety, and Netai put the young men and boys to guard the place.

“‘Now,’ we said, ‘the children, the women and the old and weak people are here; they are safe, and we have *work to do*.’ For two days *mafeli pwahas mafeli pworap*, ‘from morning till evening,’ I prepared for myself cartridges until my belt was filled, and that night we slept. In the early morning we rose and ate food. ‘Now,’ said I to the young men with me, ‘be ready; we have work before us,’ and I stood up and tied my cartridge-belt round me. I put my gun over my shoulder, and, holding out my hand to the carpenter, said: ‘Give me caps’. He gave me them, and I placed them in my garment. ‘Give me tobacco.’ He handed me that, and I put it in my pouch. ‘Give me matches,’ and he gave them to me. ‘My love to you all,’ I said; ‘I am away.’ I overtook Netai and the young men on the road, and we hastened along our way. All day we walked and told each other to be ready for any foe that we might meet; for the heathen were all around us, and at any moment might find out our errand. When we reached Roviliau we rested and drank *neserop*, ‘cocoanut milk,’ for we were tired and thirsty. Soon we had to hurry on. Darkness came upon us; we could scarcely see the road, but *I* knew every spot, every turn of it; for was it not my land? Some of the lads, their



hearts failed them. 'We cannot see; we do not know the *selat*, 'road,' they said. 'I am the *selat*,' I called back, as I snatched a branch that was shining<sup>13</sup> with light and tied it on my back. So, as I darted along under great trees, over clefts, they caught the glimmer of the light ahead and followed. Soon we approached Arawau, and we spoke in whispers, for there might be foes near. 'Hear, you young men;' I said, 'there may be many to meet; there may be but few; these *nele'okevat*, 'heathen,' have killed our Misi. Are we going to allow this and do nothing?' They say, 'These Christians are women; they cannot handle a battle-axe, and we can kill as we please.' 'Show them your strength, if you have any. Let no man know his brother or his father; we have no brothers, no fathers to-night. At Arawau, we killed the brother of my mother and his wife. They had hated our Misi, and done him harm, and Christian boys had been cooked and eaten in that very village.' Then we turned again to the road, remembering that we had left Wawis and Lifu Ukina alone, and that they might be in danger; but they were quite safe.

"Soon we caught sight of footprints, and came across a young man—an enemy. We deceived him, and told him to come and show us the road. He pointed it out: 'There is the *selat*'. 'Come and show us,' we answered, 'we do not know it; go you ahead and we will follow.' He seemed to suspect something; but, though afraid, tried to hide his fear, and came forward. Nariovi was behind him, and when he saw his chance killed the man, and he lay dead by the roadside. Later we fell in with more people. One man, his name was Umas, a man of Unepang, talked with us, and when he left I stole away from my friends and followed him. It was not long before he, too, fell dying from a wound by my gun-shot. Umas was a *fan-lō*, 'great chief,' or one belonging to a

family of High Chiefs, of Unepang, and after his death his people vowed vengeance on me. It was for this that the *oveteme Unepang*<sup>14</sup> hated me, and *you* know, Misi, that for years they wanted my death.

“So we returned to Umbongkora, our hands red with blood, and our hearts, perhaps, red too. We would have gone on with the revenge, but, we said, that, perhaps, if we did, the missionaries would say that we were heathen and murderers ourselves. But, Misi, though we were sorry afterwards for our conduct, I sometimes think that we did not do so wrongly as some said we did. The Erromangans were killing, killing all the time, cruel to the Christians, and doing everything to endanger the lives of the missionaries. They had killed Mr. Williams and Mr. Harris, then Mr. Gordon and his wife, and now they had cruelly slain my own Misi, and still their bad work went on. They said we were ‘women’. We showed them that we were men as well as Christians, and that we would defend our friends and ourselves against their cruelties. When we returned to Umbongkora, the people were still gathered together, and Soso at their head. We kept watch every night within the stockade, and we had long talks together. Some wished to ask the missionaries to take us away in the *Dayspring*, and put us on an island where we might worship without fear and in peace. But others of us were against this. We said, ‘What is this word—that the missionaries take us away? Who can tell when we can return to this island and when we can have peace? If God be for us He will protect us, and will be with us here in our own land and not in the land of the stranger.’”

## CHAPTER IX.

### MY LIFE-WORK BEGINS.

UP to this point, Erromanga's story has been given from the standpoint of an onlooker, but I have now to introduce myself as an actor in most of the events; for more than twenty-nine years Erromanga has been our home, and the story of the island and of our life are bound up inseparably together.


In Canada, the news that came from Mr. Gordon at his lonely post had been such as to cheer and encourage us, and my preparations for mission-work in the New Hebrides had gone on. I knew that the particular station which I should occupy would be arranged for on my arrival. I was licensed in St. Andrew's Church, by the Presbytery of Halifax, on Friday morning, the 11th of August, 1871, and on the evening of the same day, at eight o'clock, was ordained as a foreign missionary, and set apart to the special field of the New Hebrides. It was an occasion I cannot easily forget. I had never been present at an ordination service and had no idea until then of its great solemnity. Dr. Grant, now of Kingston, set forth the steps that led to the ordination; the Rev. John Macmillan addressed the congregation; the Rev. John Campbell giving the charge to me. I seemed to realise in a very special manner, at that moment, what a solemn vow I had taken, and the sacred trust that was given to me as an ambassador of Christ. A fortnight afterwards I had the privilege of being

present at, and of taking part in, the ordination of my life-long friend, the Rev. J. W. Mackenzie, who, since 1872, has been working on Efaté, as devoted and successful a missionary as our Canadian Church has ever sent to the foreign field. The service was interesting in every way, because of the great occasion and also for friendship's sake. Mr. Mackenzie was ordained at Green Hill, where Dr. George Patterson was minister.

I had always felt that a missionary should be well equipped by training for work in a foreign field, and I was strongly of the opinion that he should have a wife. Hence, while busily preparing myself in other ways, I had not left this duty undone. A friend laughingly told me at this time of the man who prayed for guidance in the choice of a wife. "O Lord," he thus prayed, "guide me in this matter, and help me to choose aright; I leave all in Thy hands, and will be content with whomsoever Thou wilt point out to me; but, O Lord, let it be Betsy." I fancy my friend and I were somewhat in the same state of mind, and, while professing that we were leaving "this matter" in better hands than ours, were at the same time intent on having the woman of our choice. On the 6th of September, 1871, Miss Dawson, of Little Harbour, Pictou, became my wife. This was not her good-bye to her parents and friends; for we visited her home and mine shortly before we set sail in October. There were numberless meetings and fare-well services. The Rev. J. W. and Mrs. Mackenzie and the Rev. J. D. and Mrs. Murray were to leave for the New Hebrides at the same time, and at these different gatherings we met many friends whose thoughts and prayers were sure to follow us to our far-off homes. After visiting Truro, Charlotte Town, St. John's, and Halifax, we spent the remainder of our time with Mrs. Robertson's and my own friends. I recall the sorrowful

parting with my father; how much we both felt it! My mother had died shortly before, and the double grief seemed almost too much for him. After I had left him, I turned and saw him standing alone, and felt that I *must* go back to say a last good-bye. I am always glad that I did so, for I never saw my father again. A few days later I said good-bye to a much-loved elder brother, one who had exercised a strong influence over me in my young life, and who had been adviser as well as companion and friend. He rejoiced in my decision to become a missionary, and to his loving words in parting added: "Many . . . have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them". While Mrs. Robertson was staying in Pictou and at Little Harbour, I left for Arichat, Cape Breton, to spend a day or two with another brother, whom I had not seen for eleven years, and his wife, whom I had never met. They were greatly disappointed that Mrs. Robertson had not come too, but felt with me that it would have been unkind to take her from her own family at that time. My short stay at Arichat was a very pleasant one. During that time we had a missionary meeting, presided over by the High Sheriff, a Roman Catholic and a very fine man. It was at Arichat, about two weeks after my own wedding, that I married a couple. The cousin of the bridegroom happened to be a fellow-student of mine, and, as neither the bride nor bridegroom belonged to the place and knew no clergyman, he suggested that I should marry them.

The first of our "farewell" meetings was held at Charlotte Town, but I was absent; for a storm arose, and boats could not cross the straits from Pictou, and so Mr. Murray was the only one of our party present. The next service was at New Glasgow—a fine meeting, and well attended. The Rev. Dr. Roy, who was then in



very poor health, spoke at that meeting, although his friends were anxious lest he should over-exert himself. He gave us words that night that will always linger in our memory. In speaking to the three of us who were taking up mission-work, he urged that we be well prepared. "You want good constitutions and health to carry on your work, courage, perseverance and, above all, the grace of God in your hearts, young men." The following evening we met again at Truro; Rev. Dr. M'Culloch presiding at the missionary service. A splendid address was given by Rev. Dr. M'Reagh, now Principal of Morin College, Quebec. Leaving Mrs. Robertson with Dr. and Mrs. M'Culloch in Truro, I went on to Halifax, to make all arrangements for our passage, and then returned for our final leave-taking. I cannot describe this; the trial of saying good-bye was a real one to us both, and very specially so to my young wife, who was leaving father, mother, friends and home, for a far country and for strange and untried surroundings. A farewell meeting was held in Halifax, on 23rd October, the night before we left, in St. Matthew's Church, Dr. Grant then being the minister. The steamer should have been in that night, but did not appear till twelve o'clock the next day, sailing again an hour later. A number of friends came to see us off, among others a brother and a sister of Mrs. Copeland of Futuna. Two of Mrs. Robertson's brothers were also present, and the parting was a very painful one to them. Hearing that we were not leaving quite so soon as was at first expected, I followed one of them, as he was stepping on to the wharf, suggesting that they should return for a little. "No; I have already said good-bye," he replied, "and could not bear to go back." Mrs. Robertson told me afterwards that, at one time, when she could scarcely restrain her feelings, a kind but injudicious lady came

up to her saying, "And how do you feel now, my dear?" Needless to say there was no answer. Just before the lines were cast off, Rev. Dr. Fraser Campbell gave out the hymn "Blest be the tie that binds," and Dr. Grant commended us to God's loving care in a few earnest, heartfelt words. We silently shook hands with friends who were leaving the ship's deck, and we realised, as we were left alone and the *Peruvian* began to move slowly from her moorings, that we were leaving home, and that the dear faces that were fast disappearing from our sight might perhaps never be seen by us again.

We had a pleasant run to Liverpool, and, as we were both good sailors, Mrs. Robertson and I were able to enjoy the sea trip. We made one very interesting acquaintance on the old *Peruvian*, an acquaintance that became a life-long friendship. On our second day out, a gentleman offered to take Mrs. Robertson for a walk on deck, and, when I thanked him for his kindness, I found that our new friend was Mr. Hugh Barnett, of Glasgow. As we, too, were bound for that city, we looked forward to a renewal of the acquaintance. How little we knew then what a friend he was to prove, both to ourselves and to our Erromangan people! While in Liverpool we made arrangements for our passage to Melbourne in the *Great Britain*, Captain Gray, R.N.R., and, as soon as that was secured, went on to Glasgow; Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie, Mr. and Mrs. Murray and ourselves putting up at the same hotel, the Waverley. Our first morning in Glasgow gave us some idea of a Scotch mist, unless the gloom was natural to the place. I know that I was waiting in bed for daylight, for everything was as black as Egypt, thinking what strange people the Glasgow folk must be to have their milk-carts rattling along the streets at midnight. It might be all the same for me, because I could not sleep any-

way ; but to think of other respectable and law-abiding people having their hard-earned rest disturbed by noises at such unearthly hours of the night ! A loud rap at the room door startled me at this point. " There's a gentleman waiting downstairs to see you, sir ; he has been here for some time." Hurriedly striking a match, I glanced at my watch ; *it was ten o'clock*. Dressing as quickly as possible, I found on going downstairs that our caller was Mr. Barnett, who, no doubt, was thinking, " What lazy people these Canadians are " ! With Mr. Barnett's help we found good lodgings that morning, and the same evening took dinner with Mr. and Mrs. Barnett and several friends, among them Mr. Thomas Binnie, treasurer of the New Hebrides Mission of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. We also met Mr. Robertson, head of the cotton company of which I had been agent on Aneityum some years previously. It would be impossible to say enough of the kindness of the Barnetts, or in how many ways they contrived to make our stay in Glasgow pleasant.

We saw a good deal of the city, and intended to sail down the Clyde one morning, but, after leaving the house, found the weather too much for us. We had to think of some other outing, but Mr. Murray insisted that first we should return to the house and have prayers, and would not move a step until we did. We had no private sitting-room, so had to ask for one, and as the six of us filed in the other boarders got curious and crowded round. I believe they thought there was going to be a wedding. The amusing part of it was that Mr. Murray had forgotten all about prayers, until we found that a trip on the Clyde was impossible. After a short stay in Glasgow we went on to Edinburgh, where we spent a week. Whilst there I called one evening to see Dr. Duff, the great Indian missionary. I waited



for a few minutes in his fine library, and then the Doctor came in with my card in his hand, walked over to the light that he might see my name, then turned, and with a warm grasp of the hand bade me welcome. He was tall and well-built, with prominent features; the long white beard, iron-grey bristling hair, and shaggy eyebrows lent that appearance of strength and determination which so characterised the man. His was essentially a strong face. I had the rare privilege of listening to his graphic and thrilling accounts of his life-work in India, and his eyes filled with tenderness when he found that I had given myself to the missionary cause. He laid great stress on the importance of keeping in good health, for good work could not be done otherwise. "Do not make the mistake," he said, "of doing your travelling in the early morning; there is far too much moisture then; most people fall into that error; do your journeying towards the middle of the day, and you will find that you keep in better health."

In Glasgow, after hearing him speak in public, Mr. Murray, Mr. Mackenzie and I had called on Dr. Norman Macleod, and we enjoyed very much the short time spent in conversation with him. After one week in Edinburgh, a short stay was again made in Glasgow, and, as our time was now so very limited, we crowded as many meetings and visits into each day as we possibly could. Shortly before leaving, Mrs. Robertson and I decided to visit Blair Athol, the birthplace of my father's mother. How we enjoyed the drive in the early morning across the battle-field there! the rush of trains sweeping round hills and through valleys and over great iron bridges, and, above all, the grand and wonderful scenery of the Pass of Killiecrankie.

On one of our last evenings in Glasgow a valedictory meeting, kindly arranged by the Committee of the

Reformed Presbyterian Church, was held. Rev. Dr. Symington presided, and there were addresses from Prof. Binnie, Mr. Taylor, and Mr. Buchanan of Greyfriars Church, and lastly from Mr. Findlay. He was in very poor health, and his daughters begged him, before we reached the church, not to speak. But Mr. Findlay was not going to make any rash promises, and towards the close of the evening we heard that Mr. Binnie, the then secretary, was anxious for his predecessor in office to give the final address. I remember the quick, spirited speech; his hands diving into the depths of a great pocket and out again, while he spoke to the people and then to us of the work which we were undertaking. He made mention of Mr. Barnett, the indefatigable friend who had done so much to make our stay pleasant, and who, though belonging to another branch of the Church—the United Presbyterian—had been one of the moving spirits in arranging this valedictory. Then, as Mr. Findlay went on to make reference to the Mission again and to our Saviour's words in sending forth His disciples, down went the hands into the capacious pockets. "When I sent you forth without purse and wallet and shoes, lacked ye anything? . . . But now" (throwing three black purses on the table in front of us), "he that hath a purse, let him tak' it." In speaking of this valedictory, I would lay special stress on the fact that we were being shown this kindness by those who were comparative strangers. Mr. Murray, Mr. Mackenzie and I were all from the Canadian Church, and we had no claim whatever on our Scotch friends. Their kindness throughout our stay, and sympathy with us in our destined work, was a very pleasing feature of our visit to the great cities of Scotland.

After a brief visit to London we returned to Liverpool and in December Mrs. Robertson and I, with Mr.

and Mrs. Mackenzie, sailed for Australia in the *Great Britain*. Sad to relate, our last act in Liverpool was a "difference" with a cabman. We had hurried down to catch our steamer, had stepped out of the cab, and were walking briskly along when we heard a loud call from our cabby. Hey! there's a square of glass broken in this window, and you will have to pay for it." "Rubbish!" we retorted; "we saw that broken glass when we got into the cab." "Oh, honour bright, gentlemen!" he replied; "you broke the glass, and I must have the money." We were anxious to settle the matter and get to our boat. "Very well," said Mackenzie; "you wait here, and when we come back we will pay you."

That was Saturday night, and on Sunday we sailed, everything seeming to promise well. On Sunday night a fearful storm came on, and raged till morning; but so steady was the ship throughout that some of the passengers knew nothing of it till all was over. The *Great Britain*, though only an auxiliary steamer, was at that time one of the best boats running between Liverpool and Melbourne. Speaking for ourselves, I must say that we have never travelled in a more comfortable ship. Certainly we slept soundly enough through that storm. On our waking the next morning, everything seemed strangely still, and what was our surprise to find that we were at anchor off Holyhead! The captain had been obliged to run there for shelter. So disastrous had been the storm that a large white steamer that left Liverpool for Ireland an hour before us, with all her passengers and crew, was never heard of again. We made a fresh start the following day, and, as the bad weather still kept on, did not see Capt. Gray for two days. We could not have had a kinder or a more agreeable captain to travel with, and on that, his last trip, he seemed to outdo himself in seeing to the

comfort and entertainment of his passengers. Mr. Mackenzie and I were standing on deck together when he first spoke to us.

"Now, gentlemen," he said, "I hope we shall have a very pleasant voyage; you are the only clergymen on board, I understand, but, as you know, this is an English ship and I myself conduct Episcopal service on Sundays. However, at any other time and on any day that you arrange a service, if the weather is fit, I am ready to give you every help."

This was more than we expected, and we thanked the captain heartily. Mr. Mackenzie and I took turns in conducting Sunday services, and, ably helped by fellow-passengers, both ladies and gentlemen, we used to have a Sunday school for the children. Bible classes were also well attended. The captain and his officers could not have been more courteous or helpful, and on all sides our way was made pleasant. There were many amusements, too, and one very hot evening—too hot even for the usual dancing-parties—we arranged a lecture, the captain being chairman, while I gave a short account of the islands to which we were going. A very sad accident took place one day. Two apprentice boys had been told to go up and take in the "royals," and one of them, poor boy, was struck with the flap of the sail, and, losing his balance, fell backward from the dizzy height. "He was dead before he reached the deck," we were told by the doctor. This cast a great gloom over the ship, and Captain Gray felt it keenly. He had been thirty years at sea, and this was the first time that a life had been lost on his ship through accident. The boatswain on board was the lad's stepfather, and, on the day of the funeral, the passengers, understanding that the family was poor, gave him a purse of money to take to the poor mother at home who would never see her

boy again. What a shock a sudden and fatal accident like this gives, especially if it happens before one's eyes!

Our passage took sixty days, and we were fortunate in having fairly good weather throughout. We had been a month at sea when, one day as we were sitting at lunch, there was a great commotion on deck. We knew that it could be nothing unpleasant by the look of amusement on the captain's face, as he reached for his cap and hurried on deck. Of course the passengers did not take long to follow, and we found on arriving there a colony of strange faces and characters in possession. Two big London policemen, batons in hand, were walking with the utmost dignity, one on each side of a large, wooden horse, lifelike in its appearance, and gorgeously harnessed. Its rider was as grave as the guarding policemen, and took no notice whatever of the comments and criticisms made by the passengers. A band played, and everywhere were vendors, hurrying round with their wares, dressed in all kinds of curious costumes, and pressing us to buy. One man in particular, in the character of an American quack doctor, ran a brisk trade. He had medicines by the dozen in bottles; they would cure deafness, insanity, love, seasickness, every ailment under the sun. We bought the medicines, and laughed heartily at the directions written on the labels. I saw a black woman, the perfect image of an old Erromangan who had lived for some time on Aneityum, and pointed out the character to Mrs. Robertson. There was the same little black head, and the bent figure hobbling along; it seemed to be Navusia herself. By the time the vendors had disposed of most of their wares, and the different characters had paraded the deck, every one of them drew up in line and the closing event took place. The horse had been wheeled three times along the poop, and was now drawn up by

blocks below the yard-arm and hooked to it by a ring in the saddle. As it hung in space, the rider deftly cut away the trappings, and the great horse fell with a tremendous thud into the sea, about sixty feet below. How those men cheered! We were told that when leaving Liverpool they were advanced a month's wages, so that they were only this day starting to earn fresh wages, and the "dead horse" had to be cut adrift as they began the new month. They seemed to enjoy the entertainment themselves, and it certainly made good fun for the passengers.

On reaching Melbourne, we found the *Dayspring* there, and heard that Mr. and Mrs. Murray were in Geelong. They had preceded us by another vessel. We went straight to Tancred's Hotel, in Latrobe Street, and, as an experienced man, I cautioned the ladies and Mr. Mackenzie not to eat heartily of fresh vegetables just after a long sea trip. The next morning I was the only one sick! Captain Fraser was our first caller, and how glad I was to see him again. He had made his last trip to the islands, and now, much to the regret of the missionaries, was returning home. Later on in the morning, among others there came Mr. and Mrs. Inglis, of Aneityum, and the Rev. Mr. Robertson, of West Melbourne. During the remainder of our stay, Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Robertson, while my wife and I made our home with our kind friends Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Smith, now of Sydney.

The heat in Melbourne was then overpowering. I had been twice up the country taking services; the second time, I returned in the great heat after a hurried ride to the railway station, on an old horse, too, which would neither gee nor haw. I felt wretched when I reached Mr. Smith's house. I was very thirsty, but

had only time to take a glass of water before hurrying off to the *Dayspring* to see Captain Ray, who had taken Captain Fraser's place. As ill-luck would have it, he and the officers were just sitting down to lunch—*fresh island pork*—and I joined them. That was towards the end of the week, and on Saturday Lathella, the High Chief of Aneityum, who was again visiting Melbourne, came to see us, and, as he could not find his way back to the railway station, I went with him. I could not understand why I should be so thirsty, and I thought the great heat must be the cause of it. On Sunday evening I was to take a service at Carlton, and in the forenoon Mrs. Robertson and I proceeded to hear Rev. Dr. Menzies. We went early to get a good seat, and who should walk slowly up the pulpit stairs but our Mr. Inglis himself. His sermon, or rather address on his past missionary work was—well, *not short*, and though, ordinarily, it was a treat to me to listen to his carefully prepared words, I was not much in the mood that day for them. Everything was very true and very good, but I had heard it all before. That night my own address had to be considerably shortened, and about eleven o'clock Mr. Smith hurried off to get medical advice for me. For eleven days my life trembled in the balance; it was dysentery in an acute form. By God's blessing on the skill and attention of Dr. Macmillan, the marvellous kindness of our host and hostess, and the loving solicitude of my own splendid nurse, my wife, I pulled through. It was Mrs. Robertson's first experience in nursing, and her calmness and patience in caring for me were just what was needed. And she has often said that she could have done little without dear Mrs. Smith, and that never since she had left her mother had she felt so much at home as with her. Mr. and

Mrs. Smith's kindness to us both at that time touched us very much.

Poor Lathella was much distressed when he heard of my illness, and offered to help Mrs. Robertson in any way. She asked him to go with her to the *Dayspring* to see that our boxes were all put on board. It was Rev. Dr. Macdonald of Emerald Hill who brought my wife home again, and cheered us all by his brightness and sympathy. On Dr. Macmillan's last visit I tried, very feebly I am afraid, to express my gratitude for his constant care and kindness. When I asked him what was due to him for his medical attendance, he replied, "Nothing; nothing, my friend. I only ask that you remember me when you kneel in prayer to the Great Physician above."

The time had now come for sailing to our future home and work, and the little *Dayspring* had a large number of passengers—Mr. and Mrs. Inglis, Dr. Geddie, Miss Geddie and her sister, Mrs. Neilson, with her children, the Rev. D. Macdonald, who was the new missionary from Victoria, Mr. Fred. Campbell, of Geelong, besides the three Canadians, Murray, Mackenzie and myself, with our wives. Last, but not least (I suppose it will be wise to say this), there was Master George Murray, aged three weeks. Miss Geddie was only going as far as to the Heads, but, Mr. Macdonald having persuaded her to go a little further, we knew, before we left Melbourne, that a wedding was to take place when Aneityum was reached. Dr. Geddie was in very poor health, seemed thoroughly worn out, but none of us thought how soon he was to be taken from us. It was hoped that the trip to the islands would renew his health. I need not enter into a description of our voyage; with such a number of passengers we found it



difficult to stow ourselves away, yet it was wonderful how comfortable the vessel was. She had a very cosy cabin, with deep lounges, and many a good rest have I had on them.

We arrived at Aneityum on the first day of May, 1872—a lovely morning—and the newcomers enjoyed to the full the beautiful scenery of the harbour. And Aneityum had then, and still has, the old happy associations for me. Almost as soon as we cast anchor, Mr Underwood's boat shot out from one of the little islands. He was soon on board, and Mr. and Mrs. Inglis were the first to meet him. In a second or two Mrs. Inglis turned to us; we knew at once that there was bad news from her grief-stricken face. "*The savages of Erromanga have killed James Gordon!*" What a terrible shock this was to us all! poor, poor Gordon! The news, coming so suddenly on our arrival, stunned us. We heard the full particulars of his tragic death later on. I had lost a very dear friend, one whom I had always loved and respected, and whom I fully expected to meet again on the islands. Soon after this news came, Mr. and Mrs. Inglis left in their boat for Anamé. Just as they were going, I slipped a note into Mr. Inglis's hand, telling him that I would like to take Gordon's place on Erromanga, if he and the other missionaries were willing that I should settle there.

That was on Wednesday, and on Saturday afternoon Mr. Macdonald and Miss Geddie were married in the old stone church at Anelcauhau, built by Dr. Geddie. Mr. Murray performed the ceremony, and a large crowd of spectators, white and black, thronged the building. Of course this was a specially interesting event to the people of the island. It was not the first wedding of white people there, for Mr. and Mrs. Copeland's had taken place some years previously, but Miss Geddie

was island-born—the first white child born on Aneityum, and the people of Aneityum claimed her as their very own. We have often been struck with the hearty welcome that both Mrs. Neilson and Mrs. Macdonald always received when visiting Aneityum and seeing the old friends there. But, to return to the wedding, everything passed off well. In lieu of the wedding-cake there was a huge *kalathakawan*—a delicious native pudding—the dish of Aneityum. I can't answer for the others, but I, for one, thoroughly enjoyed Mrs. Macdonald's "wedding-cake". The Aneityumese can make good food. Mr. Cronstedt and Mr. Underwood were both invited, and were present.

The following day Dr. Geddie conducted the native service, Mr. Macdonald preaching in English in the evening. Mr. and Mrs. Murray were now the missionaries of Anelcauhat, and they at once took up their abode in the mission-house. Dr. Geddie had already resigned, and this was his farewell visit to the scene of his life-work.<sup>1</sup>

That night we again went on board the *Dayspring*, and on Monday morning sailed round to Anamé. There we left Mrs. Mackenzie as Mrs. Inglis's guest till our return from the north. Our next stoppage was at Futuna. We reached the island early on Tuesday morning, and Rev. Mr. Copeland was soon on board, coming from the shore in a canoe. Just as our boat was leaving the side, she very nearly swamped, owing to so many canoes being fastened round the ship's quarter. The quickness and dexterity of the chief officer in cutting the painter alone prevented an accident. Mrs. Robertson had her first experience of savages at Futuna. But they did not seem to trouble her much with timidity. We struck on the reef going in, and Mrs. Robertson was one of the first to scramble into a

canoe, wherein was a Futunese dandy attired in nothing but his birthday suit! Crowds of natives were on the shore, and we bought numbers of native curios. "Bring everything you buy up to the house, or you will never see them again," said Mr. Copeland in warning to us. Futuna itself is just a rock of the ocean, very precipitous and rising to a height of about 2,000 ft. The landing was near the mission-house, close by Copeland's Peak. The road up to it was very steep, skirting the brow of the hill. A person venturing a walk on Futuna needs to be very sure-footed. The Copelands' picturesque home soon came in sight; it was the first house in the New Hebrides to have an upper storey. The roof was thatched, and the walls plastered inside and out. We were sorry to see Mrs. Copeland looking far from well. Notwithstanding her ill-health, she made our stay very pleasant, and a most enjoyable day was spent on shore.

At Aniwa we received a warm welcome from Mr. and Mrs. Paton. Aniwa is a small coral island about six miles in length, its highest peak being a hundred feet above the level of the sea. There is no harbour or bay, but a boat-landing, which is good enough in ordinary weather. We passed up the broad, winding path, with tall cocoanut palms on either side, the long leaves almost meeting above us, till we reached the house. It was like that of the Copelands, though much longer—the characteristic old, rambling island home, with low thatched roof. Mrs. Robertson and I were charmed with the garden; the flowering shrubs, both English and native, were in such profusion. That was the first place I noticed a picket fence; being painted white, it looked very well. Mr. Paton told me that the timber of it had been presented by Dr. Lang's congregation in Sydney. We could only stay a very short time on shore, and soon the *Dayspring* had left Aniwa, and we were

on our way to Tanna. There, Kwamera was our first port of call, and the Rev. Mr. Watt soon came off in his boat. He kindly invited us all on shore, and we should have liked to go, but the captain was anxious to press on to Port Resolution of Tanna. In the morning we arrived there. Mr. Neilson looked very well, and in good spirits; we were pleased to see him so cheery. His wife was on board with us, so that he was just as delighted to see us. Mrs. Neilson had told her sister, the bride, to stay in her cabin, and, after every one had been welcomed, she said to her husband: "Come downstairs, and let me introduce you to Mrs. Macdonald". Mr. Neilson followed her, looking very dignified, and whom did he see on reaching the saloon—he saw his own sister-in-law! Mrs. Neilson enjoyed immensely the surprise she had planned for him. We all landed and had a delightful stay ashore. Mr. Neilson had been very busy working at his new weather-boarded house, and had just finished it in time for Mrs. Neilson's return. He had covered with rough wood the ceiling of the dining-room. He seemed rather pleased with himself about that room, and we were all brought in to admire it. But Mrs. Neilson gave the roof one glance, and "I will soon have those ugly boards out of that" was her comment. We went for a stroll along the beach, and visited the graves of Mrs. Paton and Mr. Johnston. There are some very pretty spots about Port Resolution, such as the flat-land on the brow of the hill overlooking the harbour. Mrs. Macdonald purposed to stay with her sister until the *Dayspring's* return, so that when we left Port Resolution Mrs. Robertson was the only lady on board.

Our next call was at Black Beach. Dr. Geddie wanted to see a man named John Pata, who was living there. He was a Christian, having been converted by

the Wesleyan missionaries in Fiji. As we pulled in to the shore, we caught sight of a number of natives, and one of them was waving to us. He soon jumped into the sea and swam off, and proved to be the very man that Dr. Geddie wanted. He told us that he had been trying to do his best to live a Christian life and to lead others to Jesus; he had gathered the people together and prayed with them, and he was very eager to have a missionary. He was a bright, pleasant-looking man, and delighted us with his evident sincerity. Dr. Geddie promised that we should do our best to place a missionary with them, and seemed very much cheered by this bright incident.

It was Saturday evening when we left Black Beach, and on Sunday morning about nine o'clock we cast anchor in Dillon's Bay, Erromanga. We all went on shore in the ship's boat, and found the natives just coming out of church. There were very few of them; poor people! they had had much to dishearten them, but had held firmly to their faith. We landed at the great banyan tree which overhangs the river at the spot where the old mission-house stood. Mrs. Robertson sat down on a root of the tree, and the people came round and shook hands with us. Poor old Navusia, Yomot's wife, who could talk Aneityumese, tried to tell us of Mr. Gordon's death, and broke down, sobbing. "*Ah, Misi,*" she said, "*these people are heathen, heathen!*" Dr. Geddie spoke a few words, through an interpreter, to the Christian people around us. He asked them if they were able to hold fast to their faith. *Kamfaneteme*, 'we are able,' was the immediate reply. Neither my wife nor I was much taken with the place; everything seemed so gloomy; and, though the valley was looking its loveliest and the day was perfect, the

horror of what had so shortly before taken place seemed to shut out all else. Poor, dear Gordon!

We went off to the *Dayspring*, but soon landed again, this time on the south side of the river. Mr. Gray, one of the traders settled there, went with us to see the graves of Mr. and Mrs. George Gordon and Mr. Macnair. While the others went on up the bank of the river to see the rock on which Williams was measured (see Chap. iii.), my wife and I turned back and crossed the river again. We walked up to the church, and found the natives, perhaps forty of them, already there. Soso, Mr. Gordon's chief teacher, conducted the service, and all listened quietly and attentively. It was in an unknown tongue to two of us, but we felt the sacredness of the day and place, the service made doubly solemn by thoughts of the man who had brought these very worshippers to a knowledge of God and His love. In the evening we went back to the ship, and some native boys went off with us. I tried to talk to two of these little fellows, whose names, they said, were Nelat and Naiyup. These very boys, years after, became teachers, and were a great help to me in my work. Soso was also on board the *Dayspring*, and we all talked with him for some time. On the following day, early, we set sail for Efaté, reaching Fila harbour about two o'clock on Tuesday morning.

The next day we started on foot for Erakor. Captain Ray did not want Mrs. Robertson to go, was afraid she would be tired out, but she had already decided to go, and "when a woman says she will, she will". The amusing part of it was that, when the poor captain was tired and almost done out, she was feeling as fresh as when we started. After the walk we were met by canoes and paddled up the lovely lagoon to Erakor. The scenery there is very beautiful; there is

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something so picturesque about the clear, pale-green water, with masses of coral away down in its depths, the soft ripple of the canoe as it glides along to the tiny island of Erakor, with its glistening, sandy beach, and the background of cocoanut palms and dense vegetation on the mainland. We thought we had seen nothing prettier. The mission-house where Mr. and Mrs. Morrison had lived looked wonderfully neat and clean. We were at Havannah Harbour for a night and part of the following day, and on Wednesday afternoon left for Nguna, but too late to reach the island before dark. In trying to anchor, the vessel struck on a rock, but fortunately no damage was done. We landed at Nguna early in the morning, Mrs. Robertson with us. Mrs. Milne was on the shore to meet her. "When the natives told me that there was a lady in the boat, I could not stop in the house," she said. Our stay with Mr. and Mrs. Milne was all too short, and we were soon off again, and stood away for the small island of Emae or Two-Hills, where the Samoan teacher Ta was settled. He came to the ship in his canoe, but none of us went on shore. No other stoppage was made until we reached Cape Lisburn, on Santo, the station of Mr. Goodwill. Tongoa, Epi, Ambrim, Malekula, Malo, and all South Santo were without missionaries. What a contrast to things to-day! We spent both Sunday and Monday with the Goodwills, who, we were sorry to see, were in poor health. They had very little help, the people all around them being heathen. On Monday Mr. Goodwill's supplies were landed, and, as they intended not to come south with us to the Annual Meeting, we left them the following day. Four days later we reached Nguna, and, only stopping to take Mr. Milne on board, sailed for Mau. In the evening Mr. Milne, Mr. Mackenzie and I landed and walked to the

village. The natives appeared very friendly, and promised us land for a missionary. We went back to the ship, well pleased with them. The next morning, when we saw them again, a change had come over them; they kept away from us, looked sullen and treacherous, and would not hear of a missionary coming to them at all. Indeed, so threatening were they, that we thought it wise to be off to the boat as soon as possible. Evidently the Mau people were not anxious then to be taught better things. After taking Mrs. Milne on board, we touched at no island till Tanna was reached. Picking up Mr. Neilson, we sailed round to Weasisi on Tanna to see if there would be any opening there. Late that same afternoon we made Aniwa, and taking the Patons on board left for Kwamera. Mrs. Milne, Mrs. Paton and her children stayed with Mrs. Watt, while Mr. Watt came on with us to the meeting. Calling next at Futuna, we found that the Copelands were not coming, but Mr. Copeland asked that the *Dayspring* might be sent back after the meeting to take them to Aneityum.

We were just four weeks away from Anamé when we arrived there again on the second of June. I left Mrs. Robertson with Mrs. Inglis and Mrs. Mackenzie, and, picking up Mr. Inglis, we sailed for Anelcauhat. Just as we were leaving Anamé, Mrs. Robertson turned to Mr. Watt, saying: "Be sure and don't settle us on Santo or Erromanga". The settlement of the new missionaries was one of the most important matters to be discussed. Mr. Murray was already in charge of Anelcauhat. It was decided that Mr. Macdonald should open up the new field of Havannah Harbour, Mr. Mackenzie should take up the work on Erakor of Efaté, while we were to come to Erromanga. Mrs. Robertson had the first news of this from a kind letter of Mr.



Paton's sent overland. She told me that, after reading of our appointment to Erromanga, she went to her room and had a "good cry". Mrs. Inglis, though sympathetic, could not understand such weakness. She asked what the trouble was. Mrs. Robertson sobbed, "I don't want to go to Erromanga". "Don't want to go to Erromanga!" said Mrs. Inglis; "why, you could not have a better place; there is a nice river, and you will be able to have a boat and keep cattle." But my wife had no thoughts for boat or cattle just then; Erromanga, she told me, was the last place she wanted to go to. And who could wonder? When her friends, and especially her mother, in Canada, heard of it, they were almost heart-broken, feeling sure that they would never see her again. But when it was fully settled that this island was to be our field of work, my wife was brave enough for even *dark Erromanga*. When the Copelands arrived at Anamé, and Mrs. Copeland met Mrs. Robertson, she exclaimed: "Oh, why are you going to Erromanga? can you not change even now?" Mr. Copeland told me that, had he been at the meeting, he would have strongly opposed our settlement.

While at Anamé my wife had her first experience of an earthquake. Mrs. Mackenzie was in one room, Mrs. Robertson in another, while Mrs. Inglis's bedroom was some distance away. In the night an uncanny shaking began, and Mrs. Robertson was terrified. Mrs. Inglis came to her door, and said, "If you are frightened, come into my room". "Oh! I am not at all frightened; thank you," she replied, and then lay awake trembling till daylight. At the breakfast table the "earthquake" was, of course, the topic of conversation, and my wife was congratulated on her bravery. She bore the praise modestly, and casually asked Mrs. Mackenzie what kind of a night *she* had passed. Mrs. Mackenzie confessed

to having been very much alarmed, and begged my wife to sleep with her that night. "Oh, certainly!" Mrs. Robertson replied, and to Mrs. Mackenzie's expression of gratitude added, "Don't mention it; *I shall be only too pleased*"; which, when you come to think of it, was a very truthful statement. She had just been wondering how she was going to pass another night alone.

From Anamé we went right to Kwamera, landing Mr. Watt and picking up the ladies who had been staying there. At Port Resolution, Dr. Geddie, Mr. Neilson, and Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie went on shore, while Mrs. Macdonald joined her husband on the *Dayspring*. At Aniwa we landed Mr. and Mrs. Paton, and then sailed for Erromanga. It was with mingled feelings that we looked forward to our arrival there; we did not even know whether the people would have us among them. On Tuesday morning, the 25th of June, we anchored in Dillon's Bay, Soso and Yomot soon coming off in a canoe. After breakfast we landed, and a meeting of the people was called. It seemed strange that Naling, the chief, kept out of our way; he would not come near the missionaries. His conduct was afterwards explained. He wanted a missionary, but was afraid to take one lest he should not be able to protect him. "If a missionary comes here with me," he said, "and the heathen kill him, you will blame me for his death." Nothing was decided at the gathering of the people; they would first think over it well, and Soso promised to come off to the ship that evening and let us know the result. Need I say how anxiously we awaited the news, nor how we prayed that God might show us all His will in this trying time. In the evening I heard the lop of paddles on the water, and soon the canoe was alongside. "Well, Soso, what have you to tell

me?" I asked. "*You may come.*" No protection, no help offered—for how could they in their weak state offer any?—but we were thankful, indeed, to hear that we might only *land*. On Wednesday our fellow-passengers and ourselves went on shore, and a busy day was passed. Mr. Allan, a trader, and his wife were at that time occupying the mission-house, but very kindly at once gave it up to us. We all had lunch on shore, but went back to the ship in the evening, and slept on board. It was our last night with our friends; to-morrow we were to be left alone. On Thursday morning Mr. Watt, Mr. Campbell, and the chief officer took Mrs. Robertson and myself on shore. The ship could not leave till the evening, but we were busy all day getting our "belongings" put to rights. This was the 28th of June, 1872. I remember so well the evening when the vessel left; we were both feeling very lonely, and I strolled down to the shore to get my last sight of the little *Dayspring*. My heart was too full for words, and I am afraid I felt a queer lump in my throat as the white sails became smaller and smaller to view. Just then I heard a loud voice behind me, "Well! ship he go Sandwich". This was Utevo, a young woman, who evidently thought I was in need of sympathy; but not of that kind, I thought, and soon found my way back to the house. That night in that old house, alone on the martyr-isle, my wife and I knelt at our evening prayer, and the prayer was—" *Erromanga for Christ, and Christ for Erromanga*".

## CHAPTER X.

### THE YEAR 1873.—J. D. GORDON'S GRAVE.

ERROMANGA was now our home, and has been so for nearly thirty years. Almost at once we had to set to work. The old house, at a former time the property of Mr. Henry, a trader on the island, was sadly in need of repair. The day we landed, Rev. Mr. Watt, of Tanna, got some Ambrim men, who were returning to their own island, to whitewash the building. They did their best, poor fellows, but—oh, what whitewashing! When the ship left us, we had to wash the whitewash from the floors. Mrs. Robertson worked hard at it for days. The first day, a little girl named Sampat, the daughter of an old chief of Cook's Bay, interested, I suppose, in the new arrivals, came round to give us the benefit of her presence and advice. She kindly offered to wash the floors. My wife accepted the offer, and expressed her gratitude. In a few seconds there was the sound of a loud splash, then another and another. Mrs. Robertson hurried to the scene of operations in time to see Sampat all in her glory, the floor deluged with water, the small lady herself busily wiping it up with her feet and an old cloth! Mrs. Robertson explained to Sampat that although, no doubt, hers was a quicker and more graceful method of washing floors, it was not the usual one, and straightway set to work herself. Sampat soon learned to be a good worker, and lived with us for a number of years. Two other girls who helped my

wife were Utevo and Nampunia. The latter was bright, obedient and willing, and had been working for Mr. Gordon at one time. It used to be somewhat amusing to notice how many claimed the honour of being his domestics. "Who helped Mr. Gordon and cooked for him?" "I did," would be the reply, no matter whom we addressed. "Who looked after his house and sewed his clothes?" we would ask, perhaps an old man this time. And "I did" would come the unhesitating answer. Utevo claimed to be "housekeeper". "Do you say you cooked for Mr. Gordon, and looked after his house?" said Mrs. Robertson. "Yes; who else would have done it?" "And where did he keep his food—the bread, sugar, milk and other things?" "Oh! in his *bokis*, 'box,' with his clothes," said Utevo. But I believe Nampunia really had worked for him; she certainly did well when with us, and never left us.

In July the *Dayspring* returned from the north, Mr. and Mrs. Watt and Mr. Campbell coming on shore to see us. When they left us, we did not expect to see missionaries again until December. Soon after that call, a small labour-vessel<sup>1</sup> arrived from Nouméa, and two men—Numpurom, an Erromangan, and Watata, an Aneityumese—deserted from her in the night. They said they had been working for years and had received no payment. The following day, when the captain came on shore, they refused to go back, and he did not press them to do so. Watata, of his own accord, came to me, and helped me with my work. I asked him, in his own language, if he would like to engage as a servant. "Yes, Misi," was the quick reply; "but I do not want pay." "Oh, we'll see about that," I answered. I engaged him there and then, and later arranged to give him £6 a year as wages.<sup>2</sup> For eighteen years Watata was with us, and through all our troubles and

difficulties proved a warm and faithful friend. Num-purom assisted at all my work of house-building. Mrs. Robertson engaged two cooks to work week about. Atnelo, a tall, slight lad of gentle disposition, of whom Mr. and Mrs. Macnair thought very highly, was one. We liked him, and found him a good worker, but he soon left us. A labour vessel came in one day. Atnelo cooked the bread, brought it in, and laid it on the table, and then left in the ship without a word to us. The other "cook," Woris Nemetangi, 'the wind,' was just a boy, tall and handsome, with bright, rolling eyes. He simply had no idea of work, and came to us more out of curiosity than anything else. Mrs. Robertson liked the boy, but he tried her sorely, and, that I might not be worried, she put up with him patiently and never spoke to me about his doings. It was wonderful to see how well he used to work when I came in sight; I often was quite struck with the way he managed things, and told Mrs. Robertson she was fortunate, indeed, in having such a "treasure". It was only after some time that I found that *she* was doing the work, and Woris giving a hand now and again. She would go to one door to call him, while he would slip out at the other door and amuse himself by beating on the wood-work with an old iron spoon. For an hour or so, Mrs. Robertson, heated and tired, would work in the kitchen, and then Woris, with his big, sparkling eyes, full of fun, would turn up for another "shy" at it. One day I took him into my room to talk seriously to him. I spoke in Erromangan, and in the middle of what I thought was a fine sentence, rating him sharply for his conduct, I, unfortunately, could not think of a word I wanted. Woris saw my difficulty, and promptly supplied me with the term. Now, who could scold a fellow who helps one out with the words? One day we heard piteous howling

in the native premises. "What is that noise, Woris?" we asked. Our cook replied, with a grin: "Oh! only Utevo; she beat him small fellow boy". The "small fellow boy" was Essa, the little *daughter* of Rangi, the Polynesian; for Utevo was busily engaged in training her up by the discipline of pain.

Crowds of heathen came about us. That seemed to be the great feasting time, and it was a daily occurrence to see them passing on their way to the big *nisekar* or 'feasts'. The men, hideous in paint, had absolutely no clothing, but the women—then, as they have always been on this island—were well dressed. Indeed, we think the Erromangan heathen woman's attire most picturesque, with her long skirts of gaily tinted materials and sweeping train, sometimes eight or nine feet long. A piece of native cloth, patterned and coloured, is brought over one shoulder and across under the other arm and tied in a knot at the back. No head-dress is worn, but often a string of beads is wound round the neck. A tall and good-looking woman in this costume looks truly regal. In those days their faces were tattooed and always painted, the cheeks black, the nose and sometimes the forehead a startling red. With their children strapped on their backs and great bundles of stick on their heads, they were generally in front on the march; the men, carrying the great *navilah* or 'sacred stones,' in the rear. When fording the river this order was reversed, the men taking the lead, holding their clubs, bows and arrows high above the water, the great throng of women and girls following more slowly with their heavier burdens. Even the tiny girls of eight and nine years wore the sweeping skirts—the badge of the married or betrothed women; poor little things! scarcely out of their babyhood, the wives of old wretches who might have been their grandfathers.

I remember being struck, on my first visit to Erromanga, with the peculiar appearance of the natives, their dark, receding eyes, projecting foreheads, and strange, sullen countenances, and I noticed the same thing now. We scarcely ever saw a heathen smile, and rarely would one speak to us. One seldom saw a really good face among them; the men that passed us then on their feasting jaunts seemed a bad, treacherous lot. But in justice I ought to say that some of the heathen living near us were kind and peaceably inclined. Old Num-purom, the brother of Auwi-auwi, Williams's murderer, and a few others were always friendly.

Sometimes a party would honour the mission-house with a call; and what impudent callers they were! They would sit on the chairs, sit on the table, sit on the beds; and we had to put up with it all. They would examine and actually *smell* everything in the house. When a crowd of them, with their unwashed bodies and painted faces, crammed themselves into the rooms, by the time they had got fairly through them, we could scarcely stay in the house for the odour. The men all carried axes, and we could raise no objection. Some of them used to be really interested, others rushed through like great bullocks, seeing nothing and only going because others were going. They would never shake hands with us, and, in taking anything from us, would carefully place a leaf on their own hands, so that ours might not by any chance touch them. This was to prevent the possibility of our "sorcery" taking effect on them. After a time, the heathen used to bring us yams, but they were generally from the feasting centres, and, having been tied up for months, were as dry as sticks.

Exactly two months from the time of our settlement, H.M.S. *Basilisk*, commanded by Captain Moresby,



came to anchor. The captain landed, and at once inquired about the murder of Mr. Gordon. When I had told all that I knew, he saw it necessary to visit the scene of the murder, and asked me to accompany him. I answered that, if he insisted on it, I should be compelled to go, but it would be entirely against my wishes. I felt that, as a missionary, any action of mine in the matter at that time would be misunderstood, especially by the Erromangans. Thereupon Capt. Moresby kindly answered that he would not insist on my going. He wanted Naling, the chief of Dillon's Bay, and old Woris Nangeri, of Sufa, thought by some to have been an accomplice in the murder, to accompany him. The latter was unwilling, afraid, I suppose, and the only way that he and Naling, too, could be prevailed upon to go was by promising them that no lives would be taken. Messrs. Gray and Smith, the traders, also went by the *Basilisk*, which at once left for the east side of the island. On his return, Captain Moresby remarked that he regretted his promise, such was the insolence and bold appearance of the natives. There was an entire absence of remorse, and in its place a fiendish exultation over the deed of blood. He said that had he not promised the two chiefs to punish no one, he would have given the tribe such a warning as they would never forget. A number of marines were landed, but nothing seemed to intimidate the hardened wretches. The captain had all Gordon's books (some of them torn from their bindings, and pages scattered everywhere) packed and brought round to Dillon's Bay. Two of the books were stained with blood. They were all sold here by auction, the *Basilisk* officers buying some, Gray and Smith others, and I also getting a few. They realised fourteen pounds altogether.

One afternoon in August I did not go down as usual

to my building. We had decided to erect a new house as soon as possible nearer the shore, the old mission-house being unhealthy. I was at the end of the house near the garden making a towel-rack, and Mrs. Robertson was sitting inside sewing, little Sampat with her. Two middle-aged men, naked, each carrying an iron bar about two feet long, appeared on the scene, laid the bars down at the door, and came right into the house. We did not know who they were, but gave the Erromangan salutation. They made no reply. Mrs. Robertson then asked them: "Who are you? Are you from Cook's Bay?" and to that they answered, "Yes". The Cook's Bay people were almost our only friends, so that we felt perfectly safe when we heard that. In a second or two, we noticed little Sampat looking frightened and crouching behind Mrs. Robertson's chair. My wife said, "Come, Sampat; why don't you shake hands with your friends?" But the girl would not move. I spoke to the men, and, thinking they had come to inspect our house, began to show them some pictures; but they seemed to take no interest in anything; so I began my work again at the open door. One man at once slipped out, and getting his iron bar came and stood beside me, while his friend also lifted his bar from the ground; but, never suspecting anything, I went on talking to them. Just then Netai, accompanied by Novolu, came rushing along and pushed their way into the room, both very much excited. Novolu turned and actually stormed at me in Aneityumese: "Who are these men, Misi? Why do you allow them to be in your house?" I answered in English: "These are friends from Cook's Bay". Then Netai, his voice trembling with excitement, said to me: "No, Misi; he no Cook's Bay man; he bad man, Unepang man". The strangers at once slipped out and slunk away, *my* man in

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his hurry dropping his bar, and we never saw either of them again. Netai seemed terribly upset; he had got warning from some one that these men were in our house, and, taking Novolu, who could talk Aneityumese, ran at once to our help. There could be no doubt that the intention of the strangers was to brain us both, for the people of Unepang were the sworn enemies of the Christian party. Since Yomot had killed the young chief, in revenge for Mr. Gordon's death, there had been a deadly feud; the very name "Unepang" was enough to strike terror into the hearts of our people.

When the *Basilisk* left us, we were busy preparing for a boat trip to Aniwa. I built an awning over the *Yarra-Yarra*, Mr. Macnair's lifeboat, and everything was being got ready for a start. One day we were surprised to see a vessel like the *Dayspring* herself. We could not understand it, as we thought her long ago on her way to Melbourne. The visit was soon explained when Mr. Neilson and Captain Ray came on shore. The *Dayspring* had taken Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie from Tanna to their own station at Erakor, and on leaving there Dr. Geddie, though himself in broken health and very weak, thought of us on lonely Erromanga, and suggested that they should give us a call. The kindly act touched us very much. Dr. Geddie did not land, but Mrs. Robertson and I went off to the ship and said good-bye to him. It was our last sight of the "Father of the Mission," for on the 14th of December of that year, 1872, at Geelong, in Victoria, he passed away to his eternal home. Mr. Neilson wrote and gave us a hurried note to his wife, hoping that there might be a chance to send it from our place at Dillon's Bay to Port Resolution. He strongly disapproved of our proposed sea trip. "Don't go," he said to me; "you will only drown your wife and yourself." However, our

minds were made up. We were rather short of food, and besides that, wanted the cheer of a visit to friends. The *Yarra-Yarra* was an excellent lifeboat, with a 35-ft keel; had been built in Melbourne, and presented to Mr. Macnair for his work. He, poor man, had never used it, but it was in the *Yarra-Yarra* that, after her husband's death, Mrs. Macnair and her child were taken away from Erromanga. We passed out of the river at two o'clock one morning, there was a fine breeze from the west, and it looked as if we were going to have a quick run to Aniwa. We had a picked crew of twelve men and boys, and I myself steered. We went scudding along until we reached Bunkil, ten miles south of Dillon's Bay. Then we saw what we were to have. A tremendous sea struck us and carried away our steering gear; fortunately the rudder was securely fastened. I had providentially taken nails, screw-driver, brace-and-bit, and a hammer, and was able to fix the upper pintle. We then took off the stroke oar and made it into a steer oar, but it was much too short; so rudder and oar were both used. I tried to turn the boat, but could not do so; our only hope was to run before the gale. To land at that part of the island, even if it had been possible, would have meant certain death. The boys were baling constantly, and we still thought that we might make Aniwa by four or five o'clock that afternoon.

The storm increased hour by hour, and I had to take down the jib and run with a reefed foresail. The young men got frightened, but Naling, Numpurom and Watata behaved splendidly, and kept their courage up. We were making heavy weather then, the rain dashing in torrents, and the waves—not sprays, but great, green seas—running. The good old *Yarra-Yarra* sped like a flying fury before the storm. I had soon to take off

all sail, and keep her going with a large 'butcher' knife stuck in the mast. Four of us took turns in steering. Mrs. Robertson lay in the stern-sheets of the boat, the waves dashing right over her. We could have landed without much difficulty at Ifwa on the south coast of Erromanga, but we durst not; for we knew what our fate would be. After fourteen hours—hours in which we seemed to live a lifetime—Netai pointed to where Aniwa should be, and on looking at my pocket compass I saw he was right. Soon we caught sight of the tops of trees, and before sundown got right up to Mr. Paton's landing. But in that great boiling sea landing was impossible. The men had become so fagged and frightened that they said: "Misi, let us rush the boat ashore". "All very well for you fellows," I said; "though I don't think even you good swimmers would have much chance of reaching the shore; but what about my wife and myself?"

The boat settled down on the reef, but we managed to get her off, and, working round to the lee of the island, found anchorage. After some time there, everything seemed so quiet and calm that we thought we would venture a return and make a landing, if possible. With six men at the oars we pulled round again to the weather side. But it was blowing half a hurricane; we could not even look at it. To make matters worse, we could not find our old anchorage, and there was nothing for it but to keep on our oars. We now and again saw the flames from the Tanna volcano. We dodged about until two o'clock in the morning, and by that time the men were thoroughly exhausted. I decided that they *must* have rest. So we got the halyards that I had brought with me, and fastened them to the anchor. Atnelo went forward and paid out, till at last the anchor caught in the reef, and we made the rope

fast. "Now, boys," I said, "you can go to sleep". I did not need to tell them a second time. Mrs. Robertson raised her hand and caught mine; hers was as cold as ice. "Could you not sleep, too?" she asked. "My dear," I said, "it came very near being a long sleep". "I knew it," she replied. And yet never once in those awful twenty-four hours had she uttered a word of fear, but had kept calm from beginning to end, though the drenching waves were sweeping over her where she lay. . We had a word of prayer together, and then, some time later, roused the men. We had put tubs of sand in the *Yarra-Yarra* before we left Dillon's Bay, and now made a hot cup of coffee for all hands. They were feeling strengthened after their rest, and I said: "Now, men, I'll give you two bright sovereigns if you will do your best to land my wife and myself at Mr. Paton's by eight o'clock". It was then six. Though the wind had gone down, a heavy sea was running. We put two men at each oar; they strained their utmost and did splendidly, like the plucky fellows they were. Just about eight o'clock we rushed right in to the landing, and a crowd of natives ran the boat up with us in her. When Mrs. Robertson stepped on shore she was trembling like a leaf; a day and a night at sea in a hurricane was enough to make the strongest collapse. Mr. Paton came hurrying down, and, meeting her, could scarcely be persuaded that all was well. He feared that I had been killed, and that my wife had fled to them for safety. Mrs. Paton at once made us hot drinks, and then took us to a substantial breakfast. The warm reception from them both almost made us forget the troubles of the day and night before. Breakfast over, we went straight to bed, and I know that to me it seemed not more than a few minutes before the dinner-bell rang. We spent ten days at Aniwa, and what kindness



we received from Mr. and Mrs. Paton! The natives, too, seemed specially thoughtful, and our stay was pleasant in every way. On Sunday we all attended the services. In the morning, Mr. Paton preached what was, I suppose, an eloquent sermon, as he was busy flying from one end of the pulpit to the other all the time. In the afternoon I addressed the people, Mr. Paton translating.

The children of the family were all at home then. One day Mrs. Robertson and I got Frank, the baby, dressed up in a suit of my clothes; we cut a huge clerical collar out of paper, and tied a white necktie round his neck. He looked so solemn over it all that we could scarcely restrain ourselves from laughing, and were afraid that he might object. However, he only gave us a look of mingled pity and contempt, and allowed us to go on rolling up the trouser legs till they came somewhere near his feet. Having placed a pair of spectacles on his nose, and seated him in a chair, studying a paper, one leg thrown over the other, we sent for Mr. Paton, telling him that a "young missionary" was in the house, and would like to meet him. When his father came running in from his work, the dignified "missionary" looked at him over his glasses, and without a smile on his face, and seemed to thoroughly understand what an important personage he was, particularly in the eyes of the missionary of Aniwa. In 1896, the Rev. Frank Paton was settled among the heathen of Lenakel of Tanna; so were not very far wrong that day after all.

On the morning that we left Aniwa—ten o'clock was the hour—Mr. and Mrs. Paton climbed the hill near the mission-house, and watched us till we were out of sight. There was a strong current from the east and the wind was blowing rather hard, but I kept the *Yarra-Yarra*

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well up to the wind. We ran to Bunkil Bay, a distance of thirty-five miles from Aniwa, and then lost the wind. The men took the oars, and by ten o'clock that night we were safe in our house at Dillon's Bay. The natives, even the half-heathen, fairly cried over our return, for they never expected to see us again.

Mr. Paton had, some months before this, been appointed to help me with the building of my house. But the late return of the *Dayspring* from Melbourne had made that impossible. The vessel did not arrive here till November, with Captain Jenkins in command. Mrs. Jenkins was on board; also Mr. Paton and his two boys, Robert and Fred. They all landed for a short time, and Mrs. Robertson and I, when the ship had again left us, set to work to enjoy the contents of a large mail-bag. By the time the *Dayspring* returned from the north in December, the foundation of our house was already laid. Much to my regret at the time, a box that I had packed for Mr. Gordon's friends in Prince Edward Island, containing interesting mementoes of the martyr, was forgotten when the boat left the shore. It was just as well, for the *Dayspring* never reached Sydney. Instead of the house that I had ordered, there had been landed enough timber for two small rooms and a verandah. The foundation was fifty feet long by sixteen feet wide, and I was determined to build the house that size in any circumstances. Fortunately, I had a lot of rough timber that Lathella had cut and sold to me, and some that I had bought at Anauansi from Mr. Cronstedt. The natives helped me manfully, and some of our strongest men used to go miles in the bush for good timber, and would often be away for two or three days. We put up a rough shed, and there framed the building, fifty feet by sixteen feet, and a verandah six feet wide all round.

We had to be very careful, too, for there were many black birds of plunder always hanging round, and tools and nails would disappear with unexpected rapidity. While a man would be talking to one of us with a most guileless smile on his face, he would at the same time be busily picking up fallen nails with his toes,<sup>3</sup> and passing them, in the same way, to a fellow thief. And these were not the worst things that we had to deal with; we had to beware of savage heathen, who might at any moment choose to do us injury; and so my men worked with their guns strapped to their bodies, and were always on their guard. We had the whole building up at the end of December, and all ready for thatching. The heathen had sold us great quantities of sugar-cane leaf for that purpose. We thought our work would soon be completed. But my poor house was doomed. On the night of Sunday, the 6th of January, came the dreadful hurricane which wrecked the *Dayspring* on Aneityum. It commenced to blow in the afternoon, and after service we went down and put more braces to the new building. The storm increased during the evening until, at midnight, it was of terrific force. Great trees near the old house were hurled to the ground, and the natives, in terror, left their huts and gathered round us. Some were afraid to be near any building or trees and were standing in the pouring rain in an open square—the only safe spot, they affirmed. It blew until nearly daylight, when the wind went round to the west, although it still kept up its fury. The rain—a hurricane rain, cold and blinding—came down in torrents, and the river began to rise, and with the shaking and rattling of the iron roof above us, and the howling of the wind outside, we had enough to keep us on the alert. We both felt sure that our new house would be in ruins. In the early morning, after seeing that everything was

secure, we lay down until daylight. Mrs. Robertson slipped out quietly to bake bread, and later on brought me a glass of milk. "Well! is the house down?" I asked. "Yes," she replied; "Soso, poor man, came and told me just now, '*Misis pau*, "dear mistress," the house is down'. I felt more for him than for the loss of the house, he looked so very woe-begone."

What a scene of desolation met me when I reached the spot! Every post was broken, and the whole building lay smashed against the trees that were still left standing. Even in the midst of the ruin, I could not help being amused at the easy way one of the boys was taking matters. An old iron tank had been carried in the storm right across the river, and thrown against a great *nebliblé* tree. Abel was sitting on it, thumping his feet against the sides and singing his loudest in Aneityumese; he seemed perfectly satisfied with himself and everything else, hurricane included!

Mrs. Robertson persuaded me not to think of rebuilding until I had more help, especially as the hottest part of the season was nearly over. So I told Watata and Abel that they could go on drawing the nails from the broken timber, select the best pieces, and store them in the shed. I was pleased with the care they took of everything; I am quite sure I could not have shown the patience that they did in overhauling all that broken timber.

The natives had warned us not to open our doors at night, on any account, in case of attack from the heathen. We arranged a sign—three sharp raps—and to this only were we to open. One night we heard this rap, but before opening I said, "Who is there?" "It is I, Naling," came the reply.

I at once brought him in, though surprised at his visit; for of late, somehow, the chief had not been acting

in a kindly way towards us. Not that he had opposed the work, far from it, but he had not given us the help and sympathy that we expected from him. He was evidently sorry for his conduct, and had come now to say that if I would begin to build again, he, with his half-brother, Numpurom, and Nauvi, were ready to give me help in any way. "Is this true, Naling? Will you keep to your word?" I asked, and he replied that they would.


So we began work again. As we could not be in the house before the winter months, I resolved to build more carefully, and to add a verandah. Yomot, with some of the young men, went into the bush to cut poles for this purpose. It was a very hot and very wet season, and after the showers the sun would pour down his rays on us again as steamingly as before; and so we worked under difficulties. Sometimes Mrs. Robertson would bring my meals down to me, when there was extra work. This was often the case, and then she had to walk on the rough boulders along the shore as there was no other road. The days were very lonely for her, and in the afternoons, when the people were all away, the place seemed almost gloomy, so that she would often stroll down and look on as we framed the building.

Now, besides the daily school which Soso conducted, we had classes every night for the few who would come to us. We taught them reading and writing, and, though we were still novices in the language and had often to speak through interpreters, we managed fairly well. My knowledge of Aneityumese served me in good stead. And in addition to Soso's school in the old, lime-built church, he had a class for instructing candidates for baptism. On Wednesdays we held our prayer-meeting, which was well attended. Mrs. Robertson, in the damp

place in which we were then living, suffered very much from fever, and was getting weaker every day, and, as her time of trouble was drawing on, I feared she would never get over it. She became so much worse one night that I roused the men and asked them to go in the *Yarra-Yarra* for Mr. and Mrs. Allen. They were then at Elizabeth Bay. Once when Mrs. Robertson was scarcely conscious, I sent for Ohai, one of our helpers. I said to her as she entered the room: "Ohai, have you ever seen any one as ill as my wife is?" In a loud voice she replied, "Yes, often; and they all died!" I soon showed her the way out of the room, for that was a poor kind of comfort. The next morning Mr. and Mrs. Allen arrived. Mrs. Allen was most kind and attentive, and it was a great comfort to have her with us. My wife got no better, and on the 18th our child was born—dead. For hours her life trembled in the balance, and it was not until the next day that there seemed any improvement. Mr. and Mrs. Allen had gone home, but intended to return, and the natives were very sympathetic; they could not have been more so. On account of the heathen it was not safe for us to go to the graveyard by day. So we waited till night, when Soso and I crossed the river in a canoe, and in the darkness I buried our little child in its tiny grave, just at the feet of the martyred Gordons. Mrs. Robertson began slowly to improve. How thankful I was that my dear wife had been spared! neither she nor I expected it. Soso had gathered the natives together, and they were praying for her. When she began to improve, I went in among them and said, "Why! Soso; Mrs. Robertson is better". "Of course, Misi," he said; "*have we not asked God to make her well?*" He seemed surprised at my want of faith. Mr. and Mrs. Allen soon returned, and were very kind. Poor Mrs.

Allen herself took ill, later on, though she soon became better. We felt very grateful to them both. They returned to Elizabeth Bay in the *Yarra-Yarra*, and in a few weeks we visited them there, Mrs. Robertson walking up the steep hill from the boat without any help.

I now hurried on with the new house. I saw that my wife would never be well while we were in the old, damp one. The two men of Aneityum were my principal helps at the building. The Erromangans procured all the timber, Yomot especially being an invaluable hand to go into the bush for it. I remember well the day we first raised the building; the natives were greatly interested, and helped eagerly, bracing it roughly for that night. By the middle of April the building—62 ft. by 28 ft., including a verandah 6 ft. wide—was finished, as far as could be done just then; the front of the house was all weather-boarded, and two rooms plastered inside and finished completely. It took an enormous amount of thatching; when our supply of sugar-cane leaf failed, I said to Yomot that we would finish the rest with *denyūng*, 'reeds'. But Yomot shook his head; "No; we are not going to have our Misi's house badly thatched." He started away, roused the young men, and off they went to Rampun-tomasi, a district to the south of us, bringing back huge bundles of sugar-cane leaf. Yomot worked splendidly. The site of the house had been nothing but a bed of stones; the south end of the building was 7 ft. above the ground, while the north was 2 ft. below it. We floored part of the front verandah, and, when everything was done as far as we had material to work upon, we prepared to have the "house-warming". Watata and Abel cooked great pots of rice all day, and made tea. In the afternoon Mrs. Robertson was carried down from the old mission-house, and the natives all followed. On arriving, I asked Soso, on



behalf of my wife and myself, to thank the people for all the hearty help they had given us from the time we began building until that day. The men then carried round the food, which young and old seemed to thoroughly appreciate. We felt glad and truly thankful to be in our new home; a happy one it has been to us during our long years on Erromanga. Before the people left us, we had a hymn and prayer, and then all separated for the night; they had worked well, and saw that we were grateful. From that day Mrs. Robertson's health began to improve; the new house was very healthy, and we looked forward to being able to complete it in a few months.

We had not been long in it, when, one afternoon, a white boat shot into the river. I was a little startled at first, thinking she looked like a mission-boat. The man in her turned out to be Charlie, a Sandwich Islander, who was trading on Erromanga. A vessel of Captain Macleod's had been to his place in Elizabeth Bay, and had left word that the *Dayspring* had been wrecked off Aneityum, during the hurricane in January. Mrs. Robertson went away to get our visitor some refreshment, and Charlie and I sat in our little sitting-room. He looked all over the room and up to the ceiling, then said to me: "Did you build this house, Mr. Robertson?" I told him I had built it. "What a magnificent house," he said; "dear, dear, dear me! What a splendid house!" Then after a few seconds: "Well, you know, this is a pretty good house!" Our kitchen was then apart from the house, and I built a roofed covering for Mrs. Robertson to pass under on her way to it in case of rain. But we were never satisfied until we had our kitchen actually in the house. In rainy weather, the natives would all crowd in by the stove until there was scarcely room to turn one's self.



In the unfinished rooms we used often to keep food, especially meat. I remember one night when Mrs. Robertson put a nice piece of pork in one of the rooms, and carefully covered the pan. In the morning, pork and pan had disappeared, and the pan was not found till several days had passed. It turned up at last near the schoolhouse, a good distance away, but the pork was never heard of again. The Erromangan dogs had been enjoying our dainties. In crossing the unfinished rooms, my wife had to step from one beam to another; but we were glad to put up with these discomforts when we were so comfortably settled in our other two rooms.

We could scarcely get any fresh food from the people, though we offered good prices. One day Yomot shot a pair of pigeons, and made us a present of them. Atnelo, who was cook at the time, cleaned them and put them in the pantry. In a little he came with a most rueful face to tell us, "The cat had eaten the pigeons". However, he would soon fix that; we should have a treat that day. He returned shortly with a fine old rooster, who looked as if he had been round the Horn with Captain Cook. We heard the pedigree of this wonderful fowl before we sat down to eat it. It seemed that Atnelo's mother had received it as a present from another old woman, who, in her turn, had reared it up from its infancy. The two had been companions for years, and it was only the stress of circumstances that had led to the parting. Atnelo said it was a *fan* fowl. In Erromangan *fan* means something far above the usual run. I will not say what *we* thought of that rooster; some things are better left unsaid. He had probably been a bit of an athlete in his young days. I know this, that we rose from the table feeling that we had done a hard day's work, and that there were twice as many bones on our plates as when we began the meal.

From the heathen, on their way to and from feasts, we were sometimes able to buy food. To us, then, they all seemed very black; we could not tell one face from another. Sometimes a party of them would come to us and say, "We want to go to school and church, but we have no *nemas*, 'clothes'." Eager to get them to join us, we would give each man a shirt and *netoitingi*, 'lava-lava' or loin-cloth. Very soon the same lot would turn up again, stark naked, had no *nemas*, but would like to get some in order that they might attend church and school. We did not know them from one another; so Mrs. Robertson and I would give them another new set of clothes. Our Christian people had a great laugh at our expense, when they found out how we were being "taken in" by the Erromangan thieves. When we were in the old house, Mrs. Robertson did most of the yam-buying, Woris Nemetangi standing beside her all the time. The Dillon's Bay people used to beg us to buy whatever the heathen brought, and to get them out of the valley before night, for those were the days when the Erromangan Christians had to "fear God and keep their powder dry". One day, when we were buying food from a number of women, a man darted out from the orange-grove in our garden, where he must have been hiding, and seized a girl's hand. Before anything could be done, he dragged her to the river bank, and began to cross it. We were helpless, for he was armed, and when I would have interfered he waved me back, saying: "Leave us alone! this is *our* affair". It was low tide, and every now and again the poor girl would sit down on a fish-dyke that had been built across. But a knock from the butt end of her captor's gun would soon make her rise again and hurry across with him.

Towards the end of 1872 we observed the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, when a few new members

were added, and among them our faithful Yomot. In all, twelve of us sat down to that solemn feast in the old, lime-built church erected by the last of the Gordons. Soso was settled at Rampun-tomasi soon afterwards; the people received him willingly enough, but in a fortnight sent him home again; they were tired of the Gospel. Soon, however, I had three teachers settled out. It was not safe to go beyond seven miles south or ten miles north of us; we could land at Elizabeth Bay and Sufa, a village near Dillon's Bay, but one of the worst and most dangerous places was right in our bay, at a little spot called Raumpong and at the southern point. On Sundays we divided our company. Leaving some of the strong men with my wife, I would take others, and, with them, visit the villages in and about the valley, often going up on the hill-land to the north of our house. The little village of Ari was a favourite resort for us; for the young chief and sometimes others always came to the services. We used to take advantage of the feasting season to see all the strangers, and would cross the river and walk as far as the "forks," where the people often gathered. It was quite a common thing to see them all disappearing, as if by magic, as soon as I came in sight. If we came upon them unawares, we sometimes succeeded in persuading one or two to stop; they listened attentively and seemed to enjoy hearing us sing, but as soon as we began to pray they would run away. By the time the prayer was over, there was no one to be seen. Places to which we dared not go overland could sometimes be visited by boat.

As soon as we were in our new home we were able to give ourselves more to teaching, and every afternoon was occupied with classes. Mrs. Robertson taught some of the young girls, and also several bright little boys,

on our back verandah. But the little boys were very rarely allowed to come, so that they did not learn to read as quickly as she hoped they would. My school was conducted in the grass church up the valley, and on the whole it was very well attended.

As I have already mentioned, we heard from "Charlie," the islander from Efaté, of the wreck of the *Dayspring* in January. After being a month at Anelcauhat, the ship-wrecked people had been taken by another vessel to Nouméa, from whence they reached Sydney. We felt sure that some ship would soon come in the *Dayspring's* place. One afternoon, the 15th of June, I was in school when Mrs. Robertson passed on her way to the old mission-house, where we still kept most of our stores. She looked in, and, getting my attention, pointed out seawards. I knew what that meant, and slipping out saw a big, lead-coloured barquentine hastening across the bay. Mrs. Robertson felt sure that it was a mission-ship, but I told her it was far too big for that, it was probably a labour ship returning natives. "You will find that *I* am right," she said, as she hurried on. So fully convinced was she in her own mind that she was on her way then to get blankets and bedding for the visitors she expected to entertain. I went back to my school until four o'clock, and when I reached home found my wife busy making scones. "For returned labourers?" I asked. "No; for missionaries," she replied. She was right, after all. I determined, if no boat came on shore, I would go off in a canoe after tea. The *Yarra-Yarra* had been hauled up, and it was not worth while putting her in the water till it was necessary. It was nearly eight o'clock when, just as I was about to go down to the shore, I heard the sound of rowlocks in a boat, and a voice: "Good evening, Mr. Robertson". It was Captain Jenkins, and I called

back, "Good evening. Is Mr. Annand there?" "Yes; I'm here, Robertson," and in another moment Annand sprang on shore. How pleased I was to see him, a friend, and all the way from dear old Canada!

Mrs. Annand stayed on board, but Mrs. Goodwill and her child were in the boat, and would spend the night on shore. My wife's blankets were needed after all. We were soon up at the house, and got all the news from the Captain and Mr. Annand. They told us that this was the *Paragon*, chartered for four months to do the mission work. Among our letters was one from the Church at home, disapproving strongly of our step in coming here, but, withal, assuring us of their sympathy and prayers. In the morning I went off to the ship in the *Yarra-Yarra* and brought back Mr. and Mrs. Annand, who, with Mrs. Goodwill, spent the day with us. In the evening the ship and our friends left us, and we were again alone. That night we heard the death-wail in the valley; the weird moaning was kept up for hours. The death was that of Uviyemul, who had been married to a Tanna man. We had visited her daily during her illness, climbing up the steep hill to her grass hut, and taking food and medicine to her.

On the return of the *Paragon* from the north we took passage in her. Mrs. Robertson stayed at Futuna with Mrs. Copeland, while I attended the Annual Meeting at Anelcahat. Mr. Annand was appointed to take up work at Fila on Efaté. I should have liked him to come to Erromanga, for there was a grand opening at Cook's Bay. It was thought, however, that Fila was the more suitable station at that time, and accordingly Mr. and Mrs. Annand were settled there on their return, the small island of Iririki being their headquarters. The report from Erromanga for that year—our first—

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was regarded as very encouraging. I was able to tell of a teacher having been settled five miles south of Dillon's Bay, another at Sufa, one near the south-east arm of Cook's Bay, and still another at Unōva, in Portinia Bay, near the spot of Mr. Gordon's martyrdom. Mr. Inglis seemed specially pleased at the bright aspect of our work, and remarked that, though they all sympathised with us in our time of trouble and loneliness in this hard field, he was glad to remember that from the first he had favoured our settlement on Erromanga.

On my return, after being about a month at home, I walked across the island, taking with me a teacher and his wife, who were to be settled at Impotak, the chief, Narai, having promised them his help and protection. Leaving Dillon's Bay in the early morning, we pressed on towards Cook's Bay, taking a short track down as far as Cook's River, which we reached about eight at night. Two of my men, Naling and Sempint, swam the river in order to get a canoe to ferry me across. It was half-past nine before the canoe came. I thought it would be best to get my provisions and other things across first, and gave the men all my baskets. Half-way across, the outrigger came off, and the canoe was upset; the baskets with my tea and sugar, flour and bread, sank to the bottom. The men managed to mend the outrigger, and ferried us all safely across. It was ten o'clock at night when we reached the church, but, as just at that time no teacher was in charge, I knew I must depend on the chief and people for food. But not a bite of food was I offered. They were angry about a marriage that had taken place shortly before at Dillon's Bay, and no one came near us. The next morning early we started for Impau, on our way homewards. Some of the boys had managed to get some green bananas, which they roasted. I would gladly

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have eaten one, had there been any left, but all I saw was skins. I suppose they never dreamt that I would touch such food. We crossed the river again, and then had to walk several miles. I began to feel very weak and faint, for I had had nothing to eat since noon the day before. The men told me to tie creepers tightly round my body; they try that plan themselves when hungry. I did so, and felt some relief. But we were all very glad when, about eight miles from Cook's Bay, we came in sight of a neatly thatched teacher's house; we knew that we should find friends here. The chief almost at once brought me a roasted *taro* and a daintily cooked fowl, with a great hot stone right inside of it. Needless to say I set to, and, with my fingers for forks, I picked that fowl clean. By the time I had finished that fowl off, and the vegetable as well, I felt really comfortable. We stopped at Impau until the next day, and the chief loaded my people and myself with food. The teacher Netevisuo and his wife were doing good work, and seemed to be well liked. In the morning we started again, and this time had to walk inland. We reached Imelevi in the evening, and old Uluhoi, the chief, gave us a grand welcome; two pigs were killed in honour of our visit. I could not touch pork, and asked Uluhoi if he could get me a fowl. He hurried away at once, and soon returned with a fowl and about a dozen of eggs. "You can have the fowl to-night, Misi, and eat the eggs in the morning."

I did *not* eat those eggs in the morning, for, with a little delay, they would all have been chickens. The next morning we settled Nofen and his wife, Uvoi, at Impotak, seemingly in very favourable circumstances. Narai, the chief, pleased me by his delight and gratitude at their arrival and his thoughtfulness for their comfort. The poor fellow met with a painful accident shortly

after this. He was cutting branches off trees, to clear ground for a plantation, when his large knife slipped and cut into his left hand, almost severing it from the wrist. He was a fine man, a true Christian, and, some years later, was a martyr for the faith.

Perhaps one of the most touching incidents of that year, 1873, was our visit in September to the grave of James Gordon. Netai had often been to it, but by a circuitous route; again and again had my people promised to go with me, but each time had failed me. This time I made arrangements, and with a good crew left Dillon's Bay at daylight. On the following morning, when we reached Sumprim, which was near the spot, not one of the men would land. Though they had promised their help, at the last their courage failed. "What is your reason?" I asked. Their answer was, "If anything should happen to you, the Cook's Bay people will blame us". I knew that there must be something else that they were keeping back; for, as I said then, they "could have told me this before we left home". I determined to head the *Yarra-Yarra* straight for Cook's Bay and find out the true reason. We reached the Bay in the evening, and soon met the chiefs and people. They had no objection to my going, they said. The real reason of the men's refusal to land was fear of the Potnuma people. Utevo, the sister of Naling, the chief of Dillon's Bay, had as a child been promised in marriage to the chief of Sumprim. When she grew up and became a Christian, she would not go to him, and her brother had taken her part—the case which is mentioned in Mr. Gordon's letter in a previous chapter. I had married her to Atnelo at Dillon's Bay some months before, and, Naling being one of my crew, they all knew that, should they fall into the hands of



the angry Sumprim chief, not one would escape. It was of no use to try to persuade them, and reluctantly I turned back to Dillon's Bay, entering the river at sundown.

After a week at home I asked for volunteers to go again. There was a hearty response. Watata and Abel, both Aneityumese, Yomot, Ukina, Woris, Numpurom, Netai, Noyé and others—fifteen in all—signified their willingness to accompany me. The night before we were to leave Mrs. Robertson was very much agitated, and begged me to give up the idea. I said: "If I dream to-night that it is better not to go, I will stay; but if the dream points to my going, I will go". In the morning she asked me about it. "Well," I said, "I dreamed I was not to go." "I am so glad," she replied. "But I am going all the same," I added. I felt something like the Scotchman who said he was open to conviction, but he would like to see the man who would convince him. Although she thought I was very foolhardy, my wife soon busied herself in packing my clothes in one basket, and in another a luncheon of newly baked scones, fresh butter, cold fowl and other dainties. As ill-luck would have it, that was the very basket that was left behind. Mrs. Robertson sent a boy round the rocks with it in hopes of catching us up, but he was too late and missed us. Just as the *Yarra-Yarra* was ready to leave I told the men all to stand up. I said: "If there are any *women* in the boat, let them get out now". Numpuron turned to me, "I am not a woman," he said, and Yomot, with one of his expressive shakes, which in Yomot mean, "I am ready for anything," added: "We are *none of us* women here". "Remember," I said, "you are to choose here; let any one who is *afraid* say so *now*, but I am not going to be fooled again when we reach Potnuma. Do

you all go of your own accord?" "We go of our own accord; we are no cowards," was the reply from all. Abel was quite a young fellow then, and I turned to him: "Do you really want to come, Abel?" "Yes, Misi; I am going with you; I *want* to go."

The men were all fully armed with rifles and battle-axes. That night we reached Sumprim, and landed. We did not want to go to Potnuma in the night, nor did we wish to be seen going in the daylight, so thought it safer to stop at Sumprim. We were all hungry, and the men cooked green bananas, which tasted very good. Some of the crew slept in the boat, so that we could be ready to start at once in case of attack. But not a person seemed to know of our being there, and in the early dawn we slipped away again. The men examined and cleaned their weapons thoroughly, filled their belts with cartridges, and made everything ready. When we landed at Sempiumpu, four of them were left in charge of the boat. We reached a *siman-lo*, that is, a large eating-house, and saw several men just aroused from sleep. As soon as they saw us they tried to get away, but my men were quicker, and caught them before they could escape and raise an alarm. The few people in that village could have done us no harm, but if the inland tribes had heard of our coming we might have fared badly. For our own protection we had to make these men prisoners. We at once set to work to gather coral, and made them help us, each Sempiumpu man walking between two Dillon's Bay men.

The grave is near the bank of the Potnuma River, a beautiful but lonely place, and, as we reached the sacred spot, our hearts were too full for words. I found poor Gordon buried only a foot below the surface; everything had been done in such haste after his death. I saw the awful gash from the eye right across his face,

which had been the death-blow. As soon as Netai saw this, he became convulsed with grief. He clasped his hands together, leaned against a tree, and moaned, "Oh, my Misi! my dear Misi!" reproaching himself that he had not cared for him better. We dug a new grave four feet deep, wrapped some of my clothes, which I ~~had~~ brought for the purpose, round the body, and laid it carefully down. We heaped the white coral over the mound, and made all as secure as we possibly could. We then sang a hymn; I read a few verses, and then asked Netai, perhaps Mr. Gordon's best friend on Erromanga, to pray. Poor Netai! he began, but broke down in tears. It was a touching, a holy moment to us all. There, beside that lonely grave where Gordon sleeps, we vowed to be faithful to our God, if need be to the death, as he, too, had been faithful. After the burial we walked on to where the mission-house had stood; now it was all pulled down, and everything in ruins. We saw what roused our indignation more against the cruel people, who seemed as if they could not do enough to dishonour the holy dead. A large oil-painting of Mr. George N. Gordon and his wife had been fastened to a banyan tree, quite fifty feet from the ground, and arrows without number shot into the eyes and other parts of their faces. What barbarism is in the vengeance of the savage! We at once had the portrait taken down and carried to the boat. Later I sent it with other things to Mr. Gordon's friends. We came now to the great cave where the people had once gathered for service—a rustic-looking spot, with the green moss clinging to the walls and dome. Everything reminded us of the brave man who had so often spoken and preached the Gospel in that very cave.

Walking through it with an iron rod in my hand, I suddenly felt the "ting" of metal in the ground. I

called the men, who soon cleared away the surface, and there, buried deep in soil and ashes, was the church bell, cast in London for Mr. George Gordon in 1856. Watata and Numpurom tied it on a pole, and would allow no one but themselves to carry it the three miles to the boat. The men found also Mr. Gordon's small field-glass, two silver forks, a small jug, and some other articles. I heard that the bell had been buried by the heathen, who hoped to be able to sell it to the traders. When we reached the boat, we, of course, released the Sempiumpu men. Just as I was about to step into the *Yarra-Yarra* some one pointed out to me Narai, the accomplice of Mr. Gordon's murderer, a man about forty years of age. I never saw the real murderer. By this time the people were beginning to gather, and, as soon as possible, we shoved off. As soon as we were well out of range my men fired all their guns out seawards. We let the heathen see, at any rate, that we had been prepared for them. It was "home" now, and just about eight o'clock that night we entered Dillon's Bay. The boat-landing then was still up at the old place. The crew were all tired, poor fellows, and as we passed up the river I said, "Look here, lads; you have done splendidly; I will not ask you to land me here; we will pull straight up, and I can walk back again". Just then, Naling came rushing down, almost crazy with delight at seeing us again. I called to him: "Go and tell Mrs. Robertson that we are all safe, and that I will be down at once". Naling was too much excited for that, and passed the message on to one of the women. Of course, she did not deliver it either. When Mrs. Robertson heard the sound of the oars, the boat passing *up* the river instead of stopping, she could not understand it. The women, all excite-

ment, were running to hear the news, and she called to them: "Where is Misi?"

"*Tawi iyi*," 'he is not here,' was the reply. There is no wonder that she thought the worst had happened. She ran from the house all the way up to the boat-landing, and when I met her was almost ill with fright and agitation. Just before she saw me, she heard the men's voices laughing and the ringing of the bell as we lifted it from the boat, and so guessed that all was well. I was very sorry that she had been so much alarmed, and vowed then that I would never again trust a native to deliver an important message.

That night our people were all out of their wits with excitement, and simply could not think of anything but our return.

## CHAPTER XL

### SUNSHINE AND SHADOW.

ON our first coming to Dillon's Bay, we noticed at the entrance to the river the rather novel sight of a small steamer being built; this was the first and, as far as I know, the only steamer ever built on these islands. Mr. Schmidt, a Prussian, a very handy, neat workman, who had been second officer on board the *Dayspring*, went to Aneityum, and for a time engaged in whaling there; he had then settled on Erromanga, and was still in the whaling business. He found it difficult to go round a large island like this in a boat, and thought of trying to build a steamer; for he could then not only work Erromanga, but visit Aneityum as well for business. Meanwhile he took a trip to Melbourne, and, on his way, cut with his jack-knife a model of his proposed launch. On his return to Sydney again, he met a Mr. Gray, a practical engineer, to whom he submitted the plan. Gray approved of it, and there and then entered into partnership with Schmidt. The two came to Erromanga, and at once commenced the work. This little steamer was built principally of Erromangan timber, and was about twelve tons burden. They called her the *Enterprise*—an appropriate name. The boiler was supplied through a firm of merchants in Sydney, and the fuel used was wood instead of coal.

When we were settled there, in June, Schmidt was away in his tiny craft to Aneityum, but he soon returned.

It used to be quite an event to hear her shrill whistle, and see her puffing right in to the river. Whenever the whaling boats came back from the open sea, boats, whales, and all were towed in by her. The partners, however, had not much success in the whaling line here. Soon after we came, they moved their headquarters to Elizabeth Bay, and, buying some of the land in that district, they tried cotton growing. Mr. Allen became their manager. About this time Mr. Schmidt entered the labour traffic, and took a share in the iron schooner *Chance*. He was very little on Erromanga after that. During the January hurricane their steamer was lying at anchor in Elizabeth Bay, and Mr. Gray became anxious about her safety. After much difficulty he managed to get on board, bruised and shaken, and his clothes dripping with wet. Every match that he tried to light failed to strike until the very last one, and with that he kindled the fires, and, by the aid of a few natives, got the *Enterprise* out to sea. He came into Dillon's Bay, and anchored, but the storm increased so much that he feared being driven on shore; and so he got up steam again and made for Tanna. On reaching Bunkil Bay, on our coast, the gale was so strong that he was obliged to run in there for shelter. At two o'clock in the morning, the little vessel dragged ashore, and all managed to land by the cable. But poor Gray and the natives with him were in a terrible state of distress—cold and bruised, and their clothes torn off them by the fury of the storm. The Bunkil natives were wild savages, and the ship-wrecked people knew that they might be killed at any moment. No food could be got until after a long time, when Gray secured a small bunch of bananas by promising a payment of tobacco. But so suspicious was the seller that he would not wait for payment till Elizabeth Bay was

reached; the tobacco must be got from the Misi<sup>1</sup> at Dillon's Bay. The ship-wrecked people then started to walk here, a weary distance of twelve miles; they, especially Mr. Gray, must have suffered severely on the way, for he was barefooted, injured very much and dispirited; it was a wonder he ever reached us. When the natives told us that he had arrived and was on the south side of the river, we sent word at once for him to come right across. We could not understand why the natives came back without him, but that was soon explained. He was ashamed to come as he was. I at once sent some clothes over—the largest I had, for Gray was a big, stout man—and in a short time he arrived. After resting for a little, he felt able to come to the dining-room, but had scarcely sat down at the table when he fainted away. It was several days before he began to mend, and he was still weak; he seemed to feel very much the loss of the steamer. When he was able to return to Elizabeth Bay, we would not hear of his walking there, for he was not fit for it; so the *Yarra-Yarra* took him round. During the following winter he went often to and fro to Bunkil, and used to drop in and see us as he was passing. He secured the boiler, and took all the gear from the ship that was of any use. The exposure in all kinds of weather did him much harm, and a few months later, when we were at Tanna, a letter arrived from Yomot telling us that in February Mr. Gray had died. Some time previously Mr. and Mrs. Allen had left Elizabeth Bay. We learned afterwards that, when the poor man took ill, he begged his attendants, who were from the far-away Solomon Islands, to take him to Aniwa; but they were afraid to risk the journey by sea. When he became worse, he implored them to go for medicine, but his pleading had no effect. How sad to think of him



thus alone, among strangers—and *heathen* strangers! The friendly old chief, Nalinewé, did all he could for him, but that was little enough. He was with him the night he died—a night of painful suffering. The people had, according to their custom, been crowding in all day to see him, looking at him, and doing nothing for his comfort, of course; and now the two were alone. Nalinewé said that he “moaned and moaned all night”. In the early morning he fell off the sofa; the chief was unable to lift him back, and the dying man lay in great misery until he became unconscious, and in unconsciousness passed away. We felt his sad death deeply; it seemed cruel to think of him dying in that lonely place without a real friend near him. It is probable that on that last day they gave him neither food nor water. We were always sorry that he had not been brought to Dillon’s Bay, where there would have been some little comfort for him.

On this occasion, we had left Tanna on the 6th of November. It was a lovely morning, but, unfortunately, the wind died away, and we had to pull most of the way. Port Resolution was reached at eleven o’clock that same night. We had made up our minds to sleep in the boat, but Abel slipped up to the mission-house without our knowing it, and told the natives there. Mr. Neilson was roused, and he at once sent Abel and one of the teachers back to tell us we were to go up to the house at once. He soon got us a cup of tea, which was very refreshing after the long boat journey. We saw Mrs. Neilson, too, and her tiny baby, two days old. I spoke of starting for Kwamera the next morning. Mr. Neilson said: “*You* may go; Mrs. Robertson is not going, and the natives are not going”. So we spent that day quietly at Port Resolution, and the next day started for Kwamera, on the same coast. As soon

as he caught sight of us, Mr. Watt sent a canoe out to meet us and guide us safely in. Our boat stopped there a week, and even during that short time our Erromangan crew were in danger.<sup>2</sup> A tribe, living about two miles inland, had lost some of their people on our island in the sandal-wood days, and they were now determined to take revenge. Mr. Watt found out that the chief meant mischief, and advised me to get the Erromangans away as soon as possible. On the first Sunday Mr. Watt had a communion service; with the Aneityumese teachers, and our natives, and Mr. and Mrs. Watt and ourselves, we made up a very fair number. After that the *Yarra-Yarra* left; Mr. Watt and I went in her as far as Port Resolution, and the following day the Erromangans left for home. They took one or two Tanna men with them to a district of that island where the people were friendly. The crew spent the night there, and were well treated. They told me that, in running across to Erromanga, they sighted a war-ship. The boat was hailed, and the men asked where they were from and their business. They told all that was wanted, and were then allowed to keep on their course.

On New Year's Day, Mr. and Mrs. Watt arranged a gathering of the people, and made a great feast. Prizes were given for sports such as running and shooting, and every one seemed well pleased with the entertainment. I often went with Mr. Watt when he visited the different villages to hold a service; the people always seemed to be friendly, but that was about as far as they would go. There are many beautiful walks about Kwamera and some very pretty streams. On a lovely Wednesday morning, the 25th of February, our baby was born—the *nabran Ipore*,<sup>3</sup> 'Tanna woman,' as the Kwamera people insisted on calling her. Mrs. Watt

was kindness itself; she knew far more about children than Mrs. Robertson did, and "mothered" both mother and child. Mr. Watt baptised the baby in March.

On the 25th of April there was the cry of "Sail-oh!" Mr. Watt got his glass, and soon made out the *Paragon*, or, as we were now to know her, the *Dayspring*. The passengers—Mr. and Mrs. Paton,<sup>4</sup> Mr. Copeland and Dr. Steel—landed, and spent a pleasant time on shore, and in the afternoon we left Kwamera for Port Resolution and then Erromanga. On arriving at Dillon's Bay we found everything in excellent order, and we received a warm welcome from our people. They were delighted to see the new arrival, and Numpunia came running in great excitement to carry the baby up to the house. While Mrs. Robertson was getting some refreshments ready, I took Dr. Steel up the valley; the road was very muddy and the grass damp, but with all the inconveniences he seemed to enjoy the walk. What a bright, courteous nature his was! always ready to be pleased, always eager to encourage us and to show his appreciation of our work. Before the ship left we had a short service with the people, whom Dr. Steel kindly addressed.

The *Dayspring* returned from the north on Sunday morning, the 24th of May. It was a specially interesting day to us all. We had the pleasure of having with us not only Dr. Steel but also three of our fellow-missionaries and their wives, and a communion service was held in our house that evening. Dr. Steel preached from Rev. vii. 13—"What are these which are arrayed in white robes, and whence come they?" Mr. Annand and Mr. Macdonald also took part in the service. Dr. Steel wrote that to him it was "a deeply affecting service and a night to be long remembered". On Monday morning the ship was dressed, and a salute fired in

honour of our Queen. During the day I took our friends to see the different martyr-spots. After visiting the graves of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon and Mr. Macnair and the rock on which Williams was measured, I thought they might be interested in seeing old Numpunari—the brother of Williams's murderer; so I took them to the place where he was—a very old and very feeble man indeed—dying, for he passed away soon after. Dr. Steel and Captain Jenkins were very much exhausted in going up Mount Gordon; they seemed to feel the heat and the steep climb. Fortunately, we managed to get some lemons off the trees, near which the Gordons house had stood, and though very acid, the fruit was refreshing, and quenched their thirst.

Mrs. Robertson having preferred to remain on Erromanga while I went to the meeting of Synod on Aneityum, we said good-bye and set sail that same afternoon. But we had scarcely got round the southern point of the bay, when my heart smote me; I felt that I should have done anything rather than leave my wife alone. It was very courageous of her to offer to stay without me, but I ought not to have agreed to it. When we reached Aniwa the next day, I told Mr. Paton of my trouble. In the kindness of his heart he suggested that the vessel should go right back to Erromanga; but, of course, I could not expect that to be done. I cannot say that I enjoyed the meeting much that year, and I was very glad to be on my way home again. When we were leaving Dillon's Bay, Mr. Goodwill, one of our missionaries on board, had arranged with Mrs. Robertson that if all was well, on our return, she was to hang something white on the verandah of the house, where it could be plainly seen. But when the *Dayspring* appeared she was so excited that she forgot all about the "signal". Mr. Goodwill was very

much agitated, and imagined all kinds of evils. Like a wise man he had told me nothing, and no one but himself knew what was troubling him. We found Mrs. Robertson well, though our baby had been very sick. The natives, too, had been ill with influenza, and my wife had had far too much to do, and very little help. It was a great relief to us to be together again.

During his visit to Erromanga, Dr. Steel formed the idea of a memorial to all the martyrs. The sum of forty pounds had already been collected by Dr. W. Wyatt Gill,<sup>5</sup> after the death of Williams and Harris, but at that time the island was in such an unsettled state that nothing could be done. Dr. Steel wrote to me suggesting one of three things—a tablet, a communion service, or a memorial pulpit. Our old church had been destroyed by a hurricane, and we were worshipping in a reed building. I told him that a good tablet or pulpit would be out of place in that church, and we already had a communion service. “Give us rather a memorial church,”<sup>6</sup> I then said; “nothing could be more suitable.” Dr. Steel replied that a stone memorial church would cost at least two thousand pounds, and to that I answered: “A building of stone is not what we want; it would be most unsuitable in these islands. A good, substantial weather-board church is the thing, and will be the best memorial that could be raised to the martyrs of Erromanga”. Dr. Steel then wrote, saying that, as we expected to be in Sydney later on, he would leave all arrangements in my hands. But he at once set actively to work and collected about two hundred and fifty pounds, chiefly from friends in New South Wales, who took great interest in the memorial fund.

In the early part of the following year, we had a good

deal of discouragement caused by sickness and death among our Christian people. Very suddenly one day Netai took ill. He had been at Raumpong, working in his plantation, and when he returned he said to his friends: "I have dug up yams, but I shall never plant them again". The next day he became very ill, and Watata came running to me for help. We hurriedly got a stretcher, and were carrying him out when he died in our arms. We felt his death keenly. Netai was one of our staunchest men, and had been Mr. Gordon's faithful and trusted friend and a true follower of Christ. And this was also a sad blow to the Mission; the heathen, ever ready to harm our cause, were now saying that all who took the Gospel would be sure to die.

Very shortly after this, one of the Christian women, Nuferuvi, became very ill. We seemed to be having wave upon wave of trouble, and I felt that, humanly speaking, if she died, we might pack up and leave Erromanga. The heathen were exulting in our sorrow. They had sent a message to Yomot saying that they intended to take his *gun*; of course that meant his *life*. They regarded him as the *impako*, 'the fighter,' or defender, of the Christian party. This young girl, Nuferuvi, was one of our best helpers, and was, at the time of her illness, living with Netai's wife. After a time she became unconscious, and we felt that her death was near. Mrs. Robertson was with her constantly, but at last became so unnerved that she had to go away. I, too, left for a little, and, as we had been doing all along, I again asked God to spare us Nuferuvi; and in His great mercy our prayers were answered. When I went back she was sitting up, and in a little put out her hand and called for *nu, nu*. 'Water' was at once brought, and she drank feverishly. Even then she seemed

scarcely conscious of our presence ; her eyes were open, and she was weeping. In a few minutes, with a heavy gasp, she came to herself, and I spoke to her. She said : " Misi, don't speak ; I have seen something wonderful ; I see it yet. Why do you wake me ? " I said, " What do you see ? " and in a little she replied : "*I saw Mr. Gordon, the Misi, who was killed at Potnuma, and he beckoned me to go where he was and not to turn back. I wanted to go. Oh ! why did you call me back ?*" Her eyes were streaming with tears as she spoke. For a long time she was still very weak, but, thank God, was spared to us. I believe our enemies were actually chagrined at her recovery.

This case was a real illness and no sham ; but, unfortunately, some of the others, seeing how much impressed we had been by the incident, began to imitate Nuferuvi's trance. One day I was called hurriedly to visit a woman called Namrip. When I reached her, she was busy telling of a wonderful vision that she had just had. I let her finish her tale, and then said : " Namrip, you cannot deceive me thus ; Nuferuvi's case was real ; yours is too much like it to be anything but sham ; this trance business must stop ".

About this time Lo-itevau, the chief of Sufa, asked for a teacher. Some of his people were on his side, but others were angry at the request. But though he could neither read nor write he was an out-and-out Christian, and, nothing daunted by this opposition, he at once began to build a schoolhouse. I decided to settle there Nelat, one of Mr. Gordon's converts, as teacher, and with him a man called Netai and his wife. She taught the women to read and instructed them in many other ways, and soon the whole village became quite *friendly* to us, but *nothing more*. Strange to say, that village, Sufa, though the nearest to Dillon's

Bay, has long held out against Christianity, and there are still a few heathen there following their old customs of feasting and other religious observances.

Mrs. Robertson took such a fancy to a bright young girl called Lalim Nimpu, belonging to Sufa village, that we asked her brother Naling to give her up to us, promising to teach her in our own home at Dillon's Bay. He, poor fellow, was quite willing, but told us that she was already sold to the heathen of Unepang and that he had no claim on her. Very shortly after this we saw the girl, dressed in long, trailing skirts, being hurried past our house on her way to Unepang. These people must have heard of our wish, and wanted to get hold of her as soon as possible. This young Christian girl, Lalim, was then not more than fourteen years of age. In Unepang she was surrounded by wickedness on every hand, for it was the very heart of heathenism, but instead of giving way to it and becoming as one of those around her, she taught her husband to read, and told him of her God—the God of love. The couple came to our village and lived near us; and the husband, Umas, after several years, died a sincere Christian.

According to Erromangan custom, Lalim then belonged to her husband's nearest relative. But she really would not go back to Unepang. She has lived with her little daughter ever since in Dillon's Bay district, and for about ten years or more has been one of our best and most faithful helpers; as head-laundress she has proved a real treasure. She washes and does up linen beautifully, takes such pains to do her work well, and is always obedient, bright and willing. Mrs. Robertson often says that it is fortunate for her that Lalim elected to remain a widow. Of course she had first the task of teaching her, but then it is well that her trouble is



being repaid. In many other cases, year after year, my wife has gone to all the labour of taking into the house "raw recruits"—young girls who don't even know the name of a single household article. These are under constant and careful training for a year or two, and, just when they are beginning to be useful, their relatives come to the conclusion that it is high time for them to be married. We are always pleased when these girls are married to teachers or those who are likely to become teachers. Our very best teachers' wives are those who have been under our instruction; they not only read and write well, but they are able to cut out and sew garments, and to teach those around them to do the same; they *wash regularly* and keep themselves clean and tidy, and altogether have more "*savee*" about them than those who have never lived in the mission-house.

We had some rather queer helpers during our first years here. We kept both cows and goats. Molep was the goat-herd. If he found the goats anywhere near the premises, he would bring them in at night; if not, he never bothered his head about them. For every night that they were safely penned they were two nights roaming the hills. I walked up to the goat-herd's house one Sunday morning. Molep, ready dressed for service, was very religiously studying his Bible. There had been no milk brought that morning. "Have you looked for the goats?" I asked. "No; they did not come in last night." On the flat-land a little distance from our house I found the flock, and brought them down. My "man" was still busy reading; I said: "Molep, I have brought the goats". "*Ava*," 'indeed,' he replied; and after a little strolled up slowly to milk them.

The cow-herd was Nol, a smart fellow, who thought that milk, pure and simple, was not the correct thing

for missionaries. But I was surprised when Mrs. Robertson first told me that she believed the milk was watered. I told her it could not be, that a native would never think of such a thing. One day it would be fairly good, the next very weak, till one morning I had to agree that there was more than milk in what we were drinking. The poor fellow had evidently been in a hurry, and seemed to have dipped the bucket in the river as he was passing. I decided to see the bottom of all this, and the next day rose very early. Over in the cow-yard was a good-sized tree with thick foliage, and I sat on a branch where I could have a good view of the proceedings. In a little time Nol, with two big buckets and a pannikin, came along. He milked away for a while; then I saw five or six boys, each carrying a tin, come up to him. Nol filled the tins with the warm, rich milk, chatted for a while with them, and then called out to the backward ones: "Come on, boys; bring your *kapel*, 'tins'"; and the milk was ladled out again. This was to be used for fattening small pigs. When they all seemed satisfied, I said: "Nol, will you please leave just a little for my child?" The crowd looked up, startled at hearing a voice coming from the tree. Nol uttered a shout of alarm, and then stood as if he were petrified; the boys scampered away in all directions, and pannikins and milk were thrown this way and that. I came down then and found the culprit trembling. "You are caught this time, Nol," I said; "now you can set to work and get *us* some milk for our breakfast." As far as I know, that was the last time the milk was watered. This incident gives the reason for my reply to a man who persisted, during a public meeting in Canada, in asking questions about the Erromangans. His last was: "Now, can you give any *practical* proof of their advancement in civilisation?"

"*Certainly,*" I replied; "*they began to water the milk lately.*"

After this little affair of Nol's had come to light we had no trouble; there was plenty of rich milk, and Mrs. Robertson told the people that in the evenings she would be glad to *give* them skimmed milk for their pigs. They did not like to refuse, and all turned up with their *kapel*, as they call empty meat-tins. But their feelings must have been very much hurt by our discovery of their "dairy business," and almost as soon as it was filled each *kapel* was pitched away. Tia, a tiny girl, one of Rangi's children, radiantly told us that her mother was so good that she did not throw hers away; once she wanted to do so very badly, but *atekisah*, she 'strove,' with her feelings, and only flung the milk away when she had passed right outside of our gate.

In March, 1875, we had the rather startling experience of a tidal wave. About nine o'clock on the evening of the 29th there was a very severe shock of earthquake, followed by a slight tidal wave. Watata called out: "The boat! the boat!" and we both ran as fast as we could to the spot where it had been anchored, close to the old mission-house. No boat was to be seen. With some other men who had joined us we searched the river, by the light of torches, until we reached the bathing-place. There we found the *Yarra-Yarra* safely anchored, but damaged. We brought her down the river a little distance that same night, and the next morning took her to the boat-house, hauled her up and cleaned her thoroughly. I intended to mend and paint her the following day. But that same night, about nine o'clock again, an awful earthquake was felt, which made doors and windows rattle, and shook our house to its very base. Fearing another tidal wave, Watata

and I ran up to the old house, and carried down the anchor, dragging the chain after us. We intended chaining the boat to a tree, but, when we reached it, I decided to get the key of the boat-house, and we would run the *Yarra-Yarra* right in. I reached our house and had just got the key, when I heard a great angry roar. On opening the door of the room, to my horror I saw a prodigious wall of sea, stretching right across the bay, and which appeared about forty feet high, come rolling in. That instant I heard Watata calling: "Misi, the sea, the sea is coming! Never mind the boat. Escape with your wife and child for your lives!" I sprang into the bedroom, caught up the child and wrapped her in a blanket, and, with Mrs. Robertson, rushed out at the backdoor. The native girls were standing terror-stricken just outside, and I told them to follow us. I called to Watata to chain the boat to a tree. Fortunately he heard me and did so, and then, with the Erromangans, made for the high ground at the back of our cow-shed. On his way he called to an old woman named Lalim—the mother of Navusia, Yomot's wife, who was living near us—to run for her life. But she refused to leave her charms and sacred stones;<sup>8</sup> and climbing on a pile of stones near her house she held on like grim death to them and to her heathen baubles. She escaped, but only by about five feet.

We ran straight to the hill at the back of our house. As we began the ascent, it seemed, from its dreadful roar, as if the sea was right upon us. It had then reached the stone fence in front of our house. We bounded from rock to rock and rushed through the reeds and scrub, till Mrs. Robertson, getting entangled in them, fell. I called back to her to run. She answered that she *could not*, but in an instant was on her feet and at my side. I, too, found it hard, for I was trying to

protect my child's face and head by holding the blanket closely round her. She was smiling and laughing at us, and seemed to be enjoying the whole thing as a frolic specially arranged for her. Probably she thought it was a new idea of ours to put her to sleep. It used to take us till about ten o'clock every night to walk that child to sleep. That was *indoors*, this night it was *out*, and a rather hard road to travel, but she enjoyed the fun immensely. We climbed higher and higher till we felt we were safe from the sea; and, worn out, bruised by knocks and falls, and our clothes torn, we entered a small cave and sat down. Just then we heard the men calling to us. I called back: "We are all here; bring a torch". They soon came with lights, but at once made us leave the cave, telling us that there was danger from loose rocks while sitting in such a place immediately after a severe earthquake. The danger from the sea was now over, and the men very kindly and carefully guided us back to our house. We were still so unnerved by all that had taken place that I asked some of them to sleep on our premises that night, which they very cheerfully did. We gave them plenty of hot tea and biscuits, and that night their loud talking and laughter were far from unpleasant to us.

We got up at daylight, and went out to "view the land". What a desolation! Our boat-house had been new and strongly built. It had a strong, swinging gate at the sea end, with heavy hinges and padlock. Inside were boat-sails, masts, oars and rowlocks. From the house to the river we had laid a heavy framework of Aneityum timber and rollers, over which we used to pull the *Yarra-Yarra* to launch her. But, when we reached the spot that morning, not a sign of boat-house nor anything belonging to it was to be seen—neither sails nor masts, not even the iron rowlocks. Instead

there was a great heap of sand, and stones, and dead fish in hundreds. The *Yarra-Yarra* had been tossed like a shell back as far as the chain extended, and there lay, her planks all torn away from the stern-post, and the boat herself half-full of mud and sand. And our own beautiful front grounds; what a chaos of disgust they now appeared! The wave in its greater force had been received by the river, but it knew no bounds. It had first broken on the bar, and then swept on towards our house, and laid low on the ground 100 ft. of a strong stone fence, 5 ft. both in height and breadth. It tore up a plot of about five hundred pine-apples, and, carrying with it old logs filled with slugs, and tons of fish, it spread all over our front premises, and had spent its force by the time it reached the back of the house, where it ended in only a wash.

So utterly discouraging did the place seem that, for a time, we despaired of ever getting things put to rights. But we had much to be thankful for; we were all three living and well, and there had been no loss of life among our people, nor any injury to them. Our house, that had cost us so much labour and time, stood high and dry above all the surrounding waste. Being raised on a solid stone foundation five feet above the ground, the sea passed *round* it, not *through* it. It was firm, and dry, and clean, and had stood the waves like a rock. Surely we should have been grateful to God for His watchful care over us and our people had we only escaped with our lives; but here He had commanded that no evil should come nigh our dwelling. As for the natives they are a law to themselves; nothing disturbs them. The huge wave had brought them fish of all kinds, and what cooking went on day after day and what eating! They cooked them wholesale at first to keep them from spoiling, and then boned them and

made them into all kinds of savoury dishes. The fact that dead fish were decaying all around them made no difference; they cooked and devoured the good ones day and night, their motto apparently being—"Never too much of a good thing". We had hard work to get them to set to and dig holes in which to bury the hundreds of decaying fish lying all over the valley. A great rock, which must be quite twenty tons in weight, was lifted out of the water by the huge wave that night, and set down again about one hundred and fifty yards further up the river, where it lies to this day.

After some weeks of steady work, our grounds began to look better. We rebuilt the stone fence much closer to the house than before, repaired the *Yarra-Yarra*, and made a new boat-house, and after a time the whole place looked as lovely as ever. We had almost resolved to move our house higher up the valley, but Mr. Inglis advised us not to go to all that labour and expense, as such an earthquake and tidal wave might not come again in fifty years. So we have remained here, but, as our house is only twenty feet above high water line and only about two hundred yards from the sea, there is always a possibility of danger during a severe earthquake. Only one of great severity has since occurred, that of June, 1885; a dreadful one it was, but the sea did not rise. My opinion was that the motion of the shock was then from north to south, and as Dillon's Bay opens to the *west* the sea did not roll in. I honestly confess to a great dread of earthquakes and tidal waves. You can do something in a hurricane, or if attacked by a savage man, or by a wild bull, which is much the same thing. In an earthquake you are helpless unless you are fleet of foot, and there is high ground near—and you have time to get there.

## CHAPTER XII.

1875—A YEAR OF SUCCESS.

THROUGH the effectual labours of one of our teachers, the good Noyé, we were able during this year (1875) to open up a new station at Rampuntampent. I also intended visiting the Unepang district; but, when we were all ready to start, Avelavel, a friend, came to warn us. "You are not to go, Misi." "Why?" I asked. "*Sĩ sie sĩ*, 'there is something,'" he replied, meaning that there was evil brewing. Then he added: "If you go, they are going to kill you". "Oh, well! they won't have that pleasure to-day," I said.

I then told the men to pull up the boat. There was deep enmity against us in that wild district, and trouble also between the Unepang tribes and the people of Raumpong, a village in Dillon's Bay. A "sacred" man named Woris<sup>1</sup> had managed to get hold of the butt end of some sugar-cane that an Unepang man had been chewing, and they all knew what that meant; his sorcery would cause sickness to that man, perhaps death. Woris was shot dead that night as he lay on his mat smoking, and fierce was the anger between the two districts. We were in the midst of dangers and alarms, and during the summer these seemed to increase.

One day a small vessel, a cutter, came to anchor. She was in the New Caledonia trade, and the captain wanted to buy pigs and fowls. The first day that she was here, an Erromangan, a native of Raumpong, who



went by the name of "Mr. White," visited the ship. He had been years away from the island, had only just returned, and was a thorough scamp. "Mr White" asked for grog. He was refused. "We never give or sell grog to natives," was the reply, and "Mr. White" left in a huff. The next morning he sent a small bunch of miserable bananas to the ship, wanting tobacco in return. He also sent word to say that he had seven fat hogs, "so fat that they could not see out of their eyes"; if the captain brought plenty of tobacco, knives and axes, he could have them. The captain and mate called to see us the same afternoon, offered to take letters for us to New Caledonia, and told us of "Mr. White's" proposals. When the mate came the next morning, he asked if we would give him our mail then or wait till he had bought the pigs and was coming back. I said, "There are no pigs there; the captain is being deceived; these people are a bad lot". He said, "Oh! I think the man—'Mr. White'—is safe enough; he says there are pigs". I replied, "If you *will* go, be careful. I'll have our letters ready by the time you come back".

When the mate reached Raumpong, he was surprised to see a crowd of men and boys on the shore, all armed with battle-axes and clubs. He called to them: "Where are the pigs that you promised to have ready for us?"

Mr. White answered: "We have no pigs;" and at once another native began to pull up the boat. The mate, seeing then that he had been deceived and that mischief was intended, jumped out, and tried to shove her off again, but the men, standing over him with their battle-axes, kept him from doing this. In a twinkling the rascally crowd had emptied the boat of all the trade axes, knives, calico and a long roll of Fiji tobacco, which they dragged out, lopping it off with their axes as each

man and boy grabbed for a share. Not a single thing was left in the boat with the exception of one hatchet, which, strange to say, their keen eyes had overlooked. The mate returned to the ship with an empty boat, and very much excited and annoyed. But it turned out that he had got off much better than he, poor fellow, knew. The old chief, Nōvwai, had forbidden his people to kill the white men, but gave them permission to steal everything that they could lay their hands on. Had it not been for this, the mate and his crew would have been murdered that morning, and the boat, as well as the trade in it, would have been taken by those Raumpong men.

The captain of the cutter was naturally very much annoyed at the way his men had been treated, and it is said that he threatened to return soon with a man-of-war to punish the thieves. A long-tongued native named Nangerevit, who was on board, heard this, and, though himself opposed to all that his countrymen had done and in full sympathy with the captain, he at once went to Raumpong and warned the people of their danger. The thanks that he got for his information was that if he did not make himself scarce at once they would "do" for him as they would have "done" for the white men, had they been allowed. As for a man-of-war, if it came, and its *natemenok*, 'chief,' but touched a tree or canoe of theirs, they would revenge themselves on the Misi as soon as the ship left; the Misi had been on board the cutter and the captain had been at his house; they were both white; *they must be brothers*. Just about this time, a cruel murder took place within a mile of where we were living. A young man named Noyé, who wished to renounce heathenism, was staying at Dillon's Bay, and one evening strolled up the valley to a spot where some of his people were

feasting. Returning, he passed about forty men gathered near a large house; then thinking, perhaps, that they might judge him cowardly, he turned back to talk to his supposed friend, a chief. After a few minutes, at a sign from this man, another stole up behind Noyé, dashed his battle-axe over his victim's head and right into his heart. With this death-wound the poor fellow rushed against the thatched walls of the house, then fell, covered with blood, on the stony ground outside. The murderers, of course, fled at once. On hearing the news we hurried to the spot, and found poor Noyé lying dead near the feasting-house, his heart cut right open. All was excitement and confusion after this cruel affair. Noyé's murderers were people of the districts near Raumpong, and, of course, this only added to the prevalent feeling of enmity and distrust. For a long time this state of things continued. In passing their village on the shore, when we were visiting places to the south of Dillon's Bay, we used to keep the boat well out of range of their muskets; they dared not attempt to follow us in their miserable canoes.

Hoping to make matters easier for them if a man-of-war should come, I sent a message by Naling, the Christian chief, offering to take charge of any of the stolen trade that they still had, if they would give it up. They sent word that they had given the trade hither and thither to their friends, and as for the tobacco it had long since passed into smoke. In any case, they added, they would not have given up an article to any person; they had taken it and it was theirs; the ship was a nasty ship that would only buy pigs and fowls, while they wished to sell anything they liked and get anything they wanted in return. That was free trade—all on one side, however. They repeated the old threat, that the Christian party would suffer,

should they be punished. I was the one they specially named, and, failing me, Yomot, who, they said, was the "strong" man among us. They sent word to us that they were going to burn the mission-house and drive the Misi and his family into the sea. They were going to take Yomot's *gun*. Yomot's reply was short and to the point—"And what do you think we shall be doing all that time".

Some time after this Captain Caffin, of H.M.S. *Beagle*, called at Dillon's Bay, and, hearing of the trouble, said he would like to go and talk to those Raumpong natives, and asked me to go with him to interpret his words. The Captain spoke calmly but very firmly to them of their cruel murder of Noyé and then of their repeated threats against me and our Christian people. He refused to shake hands with the murderer, whom they trotted out as a *good warrior*, saying he had killed many men in his time. "You coward," he said; "you deserve to swing for it".

I tried to ask Captain Caffin not to say anything more, for I knew the Erromangans; you cannot force them. But he added: "Now I am going away, but I shall be back again, and I warn you that if you touch a hair of this gentleman's head I will give you a dressing that you will never forget as long as you live". I hoped to be able to turn this warning of Captain Caffin's, as he pointed to my bald head, into a joke, as I saw he had gone far enough, but it was too late. They were angry, thoroughly roused, and Sorifu, an under chief, turned to the people and said "*Ulépu*," 'don't you answer him'. It was only after we reached my own house that I told the Captain the meaning of this; they would not hear anything now, and things seemed to be in a worse state of anger than before.

The way in which, at last, the enmity of the Raum-

pong tribe ceased was strange. Returning from one of their great heathen feasts some time after this, Nōvwai, the old chief, died on the road. Another man of the same name, the sorcerer or priest of the village, also took ill on the road, and lost one of his eyes by that sickness. And there had been other deaths among the people. The Christian natives looked upon all this as God's judgment upon the wicked people for their murder of Noyé and their attack upon the boat belonging to the cutter. When Navusia, Yomot's wife, heard of the death of a Raumpong man named Woris, though she was a gentle, sincere Christian, she could not restrain her satisfaction, for she, too, had suffered by the cruelty of his people. "*Kompalugi, kompalugi*, 'thank you, thank you,'" she said, clapping her hands in her pleasure; "this is good news; this is sweet; thank you, thank you; I have now my revenge for the murder of my child Noyé".

In January, 1876, our son was born. Of course, as a boy—a *natemnok*, 'a chief'—there was a great fuss made over him. His faithful and loving old nurse, Navusia, looked upon him as gold-dust. She would tiptoe about the room when he was sleeping, or sit down adoringly beside him, fanning him from the flies and the heat, and keeping a strict guard on the door, letting no one enter the room, except his mother as a great favour now and again, to whom, however, she would only speak in hushed whispers. I believe if Navusia had had her own way she would have sent us all up the valley every time the young gentleman chose to sleep, in order that they might have the whole house to themselves and that no sound might disturb his lordly repose. The natives would never deny our children anything; would spoil them by misdirected kindness, and, indeed, would

sometimes almost resent our reproving them for anything. They looked upon them as their very own, and were and are still passionately fond of them. I have known our children to scream with fright on seeing a strange *white* face, and to rush for protection to their *black* nurses. It was often through the little ones that we gained friends among the heathen; for they had no fear of any black face, but looked upon them all as friends, and, of course, put there specially to do their bidding. It is rather amusing to notice the pompous "do as you're told" style in which white children, in these islands, lord it over the natives, old and young. A few years ago Mrs. Robertson and I had both been ill with fever, and unable to go to the dining-room for meals. One day I was much better and strolled out to the room a little after one o'clock. The table was carefully laid, and there seemed to be abundance of food. Our little four-year-old Mabel was there, perched up on her high chair, as solemn as a judge, eating a little of everything, a woman standing behind her prompt to obey every order, while our dear old cook, Ohai, hovered in the background of the kitchen ready to cook anything whatever that the child might fancy. Mabel had a good deal of trouble in mastering the younger girls, who looked upon an order from her as a huge joke, and would giggle every time she gave one. However, she persevered, and, by giving her commands very pompously, she managed after a while to let them know who was "boss," always being careful to add, with as much dignity as her height would allow, "and see that you don't break my word".

The year that Gordon was born, the Synod was to be held at Nguna, and we intended to go; that is, I would go to the meeting, while Mrs. Robertson would accept Mrs. Mackenzie's long-standing invitation to stay

with her at Erakor. Within a few days of the time that we expected the *Dayspring* to arrive at Erromanga, our Christian people joined with us in observing the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It was a well-attended and hearty service, and we all felt that we had cause for thanksgiving that our Father had brought us safely through the trials and dangers of the past months. We hoped that the people who had come to it from a distance would stay until the arrival of the *Dayspring*, as we intended to kill a bullock and wanted the ship to have some of the fresh beef. But on Monday morning the Cook's Bay people became impatient to get home, so we decided to kill the animal at once. We divided most of the beef among those assembled, keeping a portion for the Raumpong tribe and also a small roast for ourselves. Towards evening, Naling and I went in the canoe to Raumpong, taking the chief his share of the beef. Just as we were pushing off again, I called back to him and to his people bidding them be sure, if they should see the *Dayspring*, to send some one to let us know. I had scarcely said the words when, turning, I saw something like the tops of three small trees above the rocks at the southern point of the bay. I said to Naling: "Look! what is that?" His reply was a wild shout of "Sail-oh! Sail-oh—wi!" and, sure enough, in another minute the *Dayspring* came in full sight. Two boats were towing the vessel, for there was not a breath of wind. About the same time that we saw the ship, she was sighted from the mission-station, and we could distinctly hear the shouting of the people. None but those who know what it is to be weeks and months (the calls were made *once a year* at one time) without hearing from the outside world can realise what we felt at such a time. Our natives knew that they could not shout too loudly for our pleasure; there was

always a call when any ship was sighted, but when our own ship, the tidy *Dayspring*, used to appear, the excitement knew no bounds. Of course, we would be expecting her for days and even weeks beforehand; then one day we would hear a faint "coo-ee" from a distant headland, for some one had seen a "speck" away to the south. All would be disturbing uncertainty for a little; then, perhaps in a few minutes, or hours, as the case might be, the calling would become louder, and when she appeared round the point, caught up by one and another, came the long drawn-out, thrilling "Sail-oh! Sail-oh—wi!" Who could mistake that call?—the dear old *Dayspring* call, that meant so much to us; friends and letters from dear ones were coming nearer every minute, and the natives had our full consent to shout themselves hoarse, for was not "the little white ship" worth it.

This day, when the vessel after a long time came to anchor, the natives fired a salute of welcome. We were rather surprised that there was no response, and when, soon after, a boat approached the shore, our men fired again, right over the heads of the passengers. Mr. Neilson called out: "Is that the way you welcome your visitors?" and to our amusement we heard that the firing had occasioned some alarm among those on board. Mr. and Mrs. Watt and Mr. Neilson were the only passengers who came on shore that evening; they remained an hour or two, and the next morning all our friends came in and spent the day with us. There were, besides those already mentioned, Mrs. Neilson, Mr. and Mrs. Inglis and Mr. Copeland, who had lost his wife just a little before this. We enjoyed very much having them all in our house. We were able after all to give them fresh beef for dinner; some of them had not tasted it for many a day.



We were told that during the afternoon of the day she arrived here, the *Dayspring* lay becalmed off Bunkil, and began to drift closer and closer in to the shore. The boats were lowered, and at last succeeded in pulling her out of danger. During this anxious time, Mrs. Inglis was vainly trying to comfort the younger missionaries and their wives with the assurance that, should the vessel drift on to the rocks, which it was quite certain she would, they would all be cooked and eaten by the savages of Bunkil. But there is many a slip 'twixt cup and lip; and this good, shrewd woman, though usually correct in her judgment, was quite wrong this time. The ship did not drift on to the rocks, and the cannibal "Bunkilites" missed their prey.

We had a good run from Dillon's Bay to Fila (or Vila) Harbour, and Mr. Annand soon came off to us in his boat. The mission-station on Iririki was looking its loveliest, the garden full of flowers, and roses everywhere. I think Mr. Annand said he had counted five hundred rose-buds one morning at Christmas. We took up Mr. and Mrs. Annand and, at Erakor, Mr. Mackenzie, leaving my wife and children with Mrs. Mackenzie until our return. Mrs. Neilson stayed with her sister, Mrs. Macdonald, at Havannah Harbour. During the meeting at Nguna, it was decided that Mr. Annand should be transferred from Iririki to Anelcauhat, on Aneityum, the station which had been Dr. Geddie's for so many years. Mr. Inglis was intending to leave the islands, and Mr. Murray had already, on account of his wife's ill-health, returned to the Colonies. Mr. and Mrs. Annand could not, of course, leave Iririki that trip, as the house had to be taken down and everything packed up first; they came south to Aneityum the following trip of the vessel.

On our return from Nguna, just as we reached Dillon's

Bay, rain began to fall—as it only can fall in the tropics—and there was not a breath of wind. For four days the *Dayspring* lay becalmed, and we had all the southern missionaries and their families with us on shore. We enjoyed very much the unexpected visit. The rain fell in torrents, but we were all safe and comfortable, and the native helpers were kind and willing to do anything for us. In addition to the missionaries and Captain Braithwaite, of the *Dayspring*, we had Captain Caffin (Lieut.-Commander, as he was then) and Lieut. Horsley, both of H.M.S. *Beagle*, with us. When, after her former visit in March, the *Beagle* was leaving the bay, she lost one of her boats. A heavy sea had come on, rolling in from the west. Captain Caffin got up anchor, and it was with the utmost difficulty he succeeded in beating out to sea. So strong was the wind, and such a heavy sea running, that one of the small boats was washed overboard. It drifted round into Portinia Bay, and Naling, the teacher there, and one of his men, managed to secure it, and then sent me word. The *Dayspring* met the *Beagle* on the way to Nguna, and Captain Caffin was delighted when he heard that his boat was safe. Captain Braithwaite lent him one of the Erromangans he had on board as boat's crew to pilot the *Beagle* round to Portinia Bay. The two ships left for Erromanga at the same time; we arrived in Dillon's Bay on a Saturday evening, and the *Beagle* came to anchor on Sunday morning, with the missing boat on board. Captain Caffin gave fifteen shillings to the teacher and five shillings to the young man who helped, and when he reported the matter to the Admiral a letter was at once very kindly sent, thanking the teacher for his care of the boat.

During the Sunday that our friends were with us, Mr. Inglis christened our baby boy, Gordon; so named

for the martyr-brothers of Erromanga. Naling, the chief's little son, was also to get his name that day, but, though we asked Mr. Inglis to baptise our child, I was desirous to baptise Naling's boy myself, for he was one of my own people. However, Mr. Inglis settled the matter. "Oh! there is no necessity for that at all," he said; "I'll just baptise them both." And he did. Mr. Neilson gave a very fine address.

The *Beagle* stayed for some time after the other ship left. Captain Caffin used to go up for a swim in the river every morning about six o'clock, and would take nothing to eat then; we wanted him to join us at breakfast on shore, but he always insisted on going off to the ship. I warned him that he would take fever, but he thought he was fever-proof. However, one morning he came down shivering, and said: "I think I *will* take a cup of tea or coffee before going off; I feel cold". I knew at once that he was in for a good dose of fever, but he would not hear of that; it was merely a "headache". He spent that night on shore, and for eight days could not leave his room, being stricken heavily with fever and ague. On Sunday nights the blue-jackets were all on shore; Mr. Horsley was very fond of music, and we had splendid singing—a real service of song. They were a fine lot of men. Captain Caffin suffered very much, and, even when recovering, he was very weak; so I advised him, for his own sake, to get on board his ship and go right away. I felt sure he would be quite well as soon as he had his work to think about. It seemed rather mean to hurry a man just recovering from fever away from us, but it was just the one thing needed to complete the cure, and he was quite well again before the *Beagle* had reached her next port of call.

When the *Dayspring* called at Dillon's Bay, with

Mr. and Mrs. Annand on board on their way to Aneityum, we were all ready for our trip to Cook's Bay, on the east coast of our own island. We had long been planning a lengthy visit there, and had decided to go by this trip of the vessel, and to spend the summer months at that east station. Mr. Annand's house, from Iririki, that is, the frame, weather-boarding and corrugated iron, was passed over to me for Cook's Bay, if I could not get an opening at Portinia Bay, and the material was now landed at Dillon's Bay. We had a rather rough passage in the *Dayspring* round to Cook's Bay. Captain Braithwaite insisted on towing my fine boat, the *Yarra-Yarra*, instead of taking her on board, and put two Erromangans in her to steer her. At dusk, it became so stormy that I would not allow the men to remain in the boat for fear she should swamp. I tried to get the captain to take her on board then, but he would not hear of it. During the night he called me to say that he was going to cut the boat adrift, that she was bumping against the ship and was full of water herself. I told him he could do as he liked about that now, but as, in the first place, he had refused to carry the boat on deck, he must either land her at my station or replace her by one just as good. He did not cut her adrift. The next day Mrs. Robertson, the two children and myself were landed at Cook's Bay, Mr. and Mrs. Annand going on shore with us. Crowds of natives met us on the beach, and carried our stores and other baggage up to the church. It was an enormous grass building, and one end of it had been partitioned off by a reed wall for our dwelling-house. There was only the one room—a big, bare place. The only article of furniture when we arrived was a huge, raised bed, made of rough poles and bamboo. That first night, Mrs. Annand and Mrs. Robertson, with the children, shared


this wonderful room and bed, while Mr. Annand and I vainly tried to sleep on a reed bed placed against the open-work wall of the church. Every one that has tried a native-made bed, whether of reeds or bamboos, knows its unsympathetic nature. First of all, there are heavy forked posts driven in to the ground, then a framework of rough poles is laid on these and firmly tied with dried fibre of the pandanus tree. It is on this foundation of poles that the reeds or bamboos are fastened, very neatly and carefully too; and now your bed is complete, a plaited cocoanut leaf being your only mattress. Sometimes a bed such as this will be very comfortable; at other times it seems disposed to kick. Your pillow—a bundle of clothes, a basket or two, and your hat—is not as soft as feathers, and whichever way you turn, there seems to be trouble. The bed itself has good points, almost too many of them, and the bamboo has an uncomfortable way of creaking at every move. If there was only some way of sinking into it, but there is not; it is hard and unyielding, and the only remedy seems to be in lying still and then dropping off to sleep in sheer exhaustion. I put Mr. Annand on the inner side of the bed, right against the wall, and took the outer side myself. We were not too comfortable, and in the early morning it became bitterly cold. We had very little covering, and as the wind was whistling through the walls we lay awake, shivering, until daylight. Annand declared that I put him against the wall in order to break the wind off myself, and to escape the showers of black sand that came driving in all night over his body. Towards morning, Mrs. Robertson missed our little "Tissie," as we used to call her, but after an anxious minute or two I found her sound asleep under our bed. Mr. and Mrs. Annand left us again

that morning, and soon the *Dayspring* set sail for the south.

As soon as possible we got our groceries, bedding, and other gear unpacked, and we began at once to make our small dwelling more comfortable. The room was nine feet by eleven feet, and I now proceeded to lay a rough floor in it. Even that improvement made a difference. We got a big field-bed put up, which took up quite half the room, and in the clear space at the other end Mrs. Robertson placed a small table, a sofa, and a rocking-chair. This was all the furniture in it. Whenever our breakfast was over, a small sewing-machine, with books and writing material, used to occupy the table, and the children had the remaining space in the room and the big schoolhouse for a play-room. It was anything but pleasant for us in the early morning, when crowds of dirty men, women and children were in the church or school. The smell from their unwashed bodies and the swarms of blow-flies made it something hard to bear from dawn until about eight o'clock, when most of the people were gone away from the school premises. And it was always while most of them were near by that our breakfast had to be prepared and eaten. As soon as Mrs. Robertson and Sampat, a young girl who was helping us, got it ready, it was quickly taken from the cook-house and pushed in to our room through a small window, and the window as quickly closed again to keep away the swarming blow-flies. I used to dismiss the school and slip through to the "dining-room," and our meal had to be eaten with almost as much haste as it was brought in. The people knew that I intended building a small house for ourselves, and I had plenty of willing helpers for this. The lime had already been burnt, the rough wood was taken from the bush, and the wall-plates and sills were of

the framework of poor James Gordon's house at Potnuma, which the heathen had pulled down and had built into a stockade after the murder. These heavy pieces of timber were carried by my young men on their shoulders to Cook's Bay, a distance of at least seven miles. I intended to build a cottage, twenty-eight feet by fourteen feet, of two rooms, and knowing how exposed we should be to the strong east wind from the ocean, I built everything specially strong, though, as it turned out later on, not strong enough to withstand a hurricane. The women were busily employed every day in plaiting sugar-cane leaf for thatching, while numbers of the men carried great poles from the bush, of course shouting<sup>2</sup> as they brought them. They seemed to have plenty of food, and always provided for themselves. They were very generous to us, too, in the matter of food. Our midday and evening meals were always taken in the big schoolhouse close by; our table was an old tool-chest; but with a spotless table-cloth what did that matter? A big saucepan full of rich, red *taro*, real Cook's Bay *taro*,<sup>3</sup> stood on the ground beside the "table," and in the evening there was nearly always a fine native pudding,<sup>4</sup> sent in as a present from some one of our people. About those puddings we asked no questions, for the stomach's sake, and enjoyed them heartily. "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise," and we never troubled ourselves to find out who made them. Since then we have been more particular.

On Sundays we were fed from the "king's table". Netai, our chief, the *great Netai*, as he was often called, was one of seven brothers—Lifu, Netai Nakam (the "great Netai"), Nari, Netai Nesebo, Uluhoi, Nerimpau and Novolu Teruvat. All were good friends to the Mission, and attended school regularly, but perhaps



Netai and Novolu Teruvat were our staunchest helpers. Novolu was our teacher at Cook's Bay. He used to tell me that when he was at Potnuma and was still a heathen, Mr. Gordon was friendly to him, and tried to encourage him to give up heathenism and to take the *nam*, 'the word'. He would say to him, "*Novolu, ate-kisah*," that is, 'strive on; try for the good'. It has always been so pleasing to us to notice the warm love and admiration that his teachers and Christian people, and even his heathen friends, bore to Mr. Gordon. Novolu was a good man, a great help to us in the work, and we missed him sorely when he was taken away. For many years, Lifu, the eldest, has been the only one of the seven brothers who survived; he died very lately, and could not have been less than ninety years old at the time.

On Sundays, as I have said, the "great Netai" himself provided our food. The Cook's Bay River ran just beside the spot where we were living, and the chief's abode was on the opposite side. He used to swim the river, striking out with one hand and holding the food well above his head with the other. As we were sitting in our room, Netai would bounce in (he never knocked), and plump the great pudding down in front of us. And it would be a *fan*<sup>5</sup> pudding, rich and well made. He used to dress himself up in rare style, his body oiled elaborately, and his hair on one side of his head closely shaved and on the other a luxuriant crop. He was a fine fellow, but of course most ignorant; a real heathen, but our staunch friend. He had unbounded influence over all the surrounding districts, and, as the Gordons always regarded Cook's Bay as the "*key of the island*," we had, at the first, intended to settle there. The missionaries rather opposed this then, as they said it would be almost impossible for the *Dayspring* to call there.



But I said that that could not be helped; we had to go to the place where there was the best opening for the Gospel, and Cook's Bay was that place; that Netai wanted us there, and would do much to help us, and his influence was too strong to contend against; that it was better to have that influence *on our side*. At that time he had three wives—one quite young, the other two older. A young man named Potnilo, a Christian, who was attending my classes, and who was already married, had another wife sent <sup>6</sup> to him. I told him that this would never do; that he must give her up; and I spoke to Netai about it. The chief agreed with me (as Potnilo had taken the *nam*); but, he said, if he puts her away she should "remain only" <sup>7</sup>—an expression that our people use, meaning that a woman should never marry. "If I become a Christian," Netai added, "I will send away two of my wives, but I would like to see the man that would dare to marry one of them." When Netai did become a Christian and was baptised, he kept his word; he sent away two of his wives—the two old ones—and I don't think we ever heard of any one that wanted to marry them. It was quite usual for a man to have several wives; three was regarded as a very moderate number. A young man, Nerimpau, a bright, energetic fellow, who was always a willing helper, lived near us, and he, though little more than a boy, owned two wives, one fairly old, or at least middle-aged, the other a mere girl. The older one, we noticed, used to do all the hard work in the plantation and anything else that her young lord wanted, while the young wife, Nial, was evidently just a doll. She always did very much as she pleased, and had decidedly an easy time of it.

Cook's Bay is right in the teeth of the trade wind,

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and, of course, it was always blowing there, and the sea rolling in day and night. But there was a great deal of fine weather, and when the tide was out we could have a delightful walk along the hard, springy shore. School was kept up regularly every morning, and in this I had Novolu's good assistance. Then, when we were busy with the house-building, Mrs. Robertson taught a class of young people ; she began this as soon as we were settled there, and had a number of bright young girls and boys in the class. The attendance at all of these classes and at the church services was exceptionally good. On Sundays the great grass church, one hundred feet long, was literally crammed with people, some being out of heathenism, others still in it, but friendly. Of course, the old people did not know one letter from another, but they religiously opened their books and held them, often upside down, during the entire service. With all their difficulties and discomforts we have often said that we never had happier months than those four that we spent at Cook's Bay. We were both young and strong, and rather enjoyed roughing it. We still have a little old wooden table that nothing would induce Mrs. Robertson to part with, for it is a memento of the old days there. It was made out of old boxes, the feet out of an old oar, and, when finished, was painted with a mixture made of red clay and oil. We took it round with us to Cook's Bay, where it had to be mended, having almost come to pieces during the passage.

The people were hearty and lovable, and all that district seemed such a splendid field for work. It was the people on the east side of Erromanga, not the west, and chiefly the people of Cook's Bay, who were our earliest and firmest friends, and we could never forget them. On most Sunday afternoons, the teacher Novolu Teruvat and I, with our Christian young men and some-

times friendly half-heathen helpers (I often had our "great Netai" with me), used to go in opposite directions to the surrounding villages, here and there speaking to the people and having hymns and prayers with them. Almost every day there came great crowds of visitors from both sides of the bay, from Norowo's land and from Portinia Bay. We used to see them in the distance, and Netai would point to them coming, and say, "*Misi, ōvun nemas*, 'the clothed are coming'." Being friendly natives, and some of them Christian, they were nearly always clothed. Those from the districts south of Cook's Bay were a fine-looking people, big men and tall, strapping women. Netai would introduce each newcomer, and, with a thump on their shoulders for encouragement, say, "*Misi, sī momu natemenok*, 'here is another chief'." Of course, they were *all* chiefs.

After we had been about two months there the *Day-spring* returned, anchoring near Potnariven, in Portinia Bay. I heard of it, and at once started for that village. When I reached it, I found that the chief officer, Mr. Macintosh, had been ashore, had landed the mails and returned to the ship, leaving word that he would come in again at daylight for our letters. I wrote to the captain for spun yarn, which I needed badly for the house, and then returned to Cook's Bay, a distance of four miles, by torchlight, getting there about ten o'clock. Mrs. Robertson and I wrote till very early in the morning; then, after a cup of tea, I set out again for Potnariven. Just as I reached the crest of the hill overlooking the bay, I met Mr. Macintosh, looking very tired and carrying a box. I asked him why he had not opened it, for it must have been very heavy. It turned out to be a lamp, which we were needing, and were glad to have. I got the spun yarn from him, gave our

letters, and we said good-bye. The *Dayspring* then left for Sydney, and I returned to Cook's Bay.

We pushed on with the building now, and after being three months in the grass hut we moved into our new two-roomed cottage, which seemed very sweet and commodious after the long weeks of camp-life. The people around us were eager to learn, and many of them were true followers of Christ. Everything seemed hopeful, and we were now comfortably settled in our new house, but unfortunately our little boy took very ill, suffering severely from fever and ague. He became so weak that at one time we feared he could not live, and we felt that it would be wrong to stay there longer than until the return of the vessel. It would have been wiser even to have returned overland to Dillon's Bay, but we wanted to hold on as long as we could, and so awaited the arrival of the *Dayspring*. We were exactly four months at the east station, and have always felt that our visit to Cook's Bay was the means of doing a great deal of good among our people on that side of the island.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### AMID DIFFICULTIES, OUR WORK ADVANCES.

DURING our stay at Cook's Bay, I managed to visit a number of the districts round us, being accompanied by Novolu and Sempent, our teacher at Potnariven, and others of our fine young men. One of these journeys was to Imbongkor, about fifteen miles to the south, in order to visit Nokilian and his brother Nōvwal, the high chiefs of that particular district. Niyau was teacher there at the time. Netai and Nokesam were with me on this occasion. We spent a night with these two brother-chiefs. How lavishly they provided for us all—pigs, fowls, fish, taro and yams<sup>1</sup> were cooked in abundance; my share was a very nice fowl, yams, and a rich pudding. After this meal we had a supper of tea, bread and fruit of all kinds. Then Netai and Nokesam "talked" the Gospel into the chiefs and their people, and tried to frighten heathenism out of them! I was lying down in the little hut that my teacher had specially built for me. I was too weary to sleep, even if my bed had had fewer sharp sticks and reeds like saw-files in it, and I was so interested and amused by the flashes of wit on both sides (for I could hear every word that was said), the many good points as well as absurd statements made by Netai and Nokesam, that, had I been on a bed of down, I would have tried to keep awake. The two evangelists talked on till midnight, then sang a hymn, followed by a short prayer by one

of them; something like a wild snort for "Amen" was the last sound I heard; and then they were all fast asleep.

The next morning we had a big meeting of the chiefs and people in the church. After I had addressed them all, I called upon Netai and Nokesam, as my "friends" in this work, to speak. They both spoke—Nokesam first, and then Netai; fortunately their words were brief. From that day to the day of their death I never asked those two good but wofully ignorant men to address a gathering in a church. If Nokesam spoke folly and madness, poor Netai's words were far more than that. It hurt me so that I went over to him and suggested that we should have a hymn or two, after which he would pray. I knew I was quite safe in asking that; he was reverent and correct in prayer. I suppose the words of prayer were memorised by hearing the teacher so often. Though, for the matter of that, there is scarcely a native on the island who cannot engage in prayer at a moment's notice, and with remarkable fluency. After Netai's prayer, I closed the meeting with a few words of encouragement to those who were striving to lead a new life, and exhorted the chiefs to show their people an example of Christian chieftainship. That same evening we returned as far as Nokesam's land, and the following day Netai and I arrived at home, the men with us carrying loads of fowls, taro and yams, all of which were presents from the chiefs to the mission family.

I had purposed that, as I was fairly near it, I would try and have Mr. Gordon's grave properly attended to and a strong stone wall built round it for protection. So I sent word to Naling Puruput, the teacher at Potnuma, to get his people to burn a kiln of lime, and I would pay them for it; this he promptly attended to. One

morning we started on our errand, a number of young men, as well as several chiefs and old men, being of the party. These latter were Nokesam, Netai, Uluhoi and Woris. The walk from Cook's Bay to Potnuma was seven miles, and as soon as we arrived there we set some of our party to work to cut down trees and the scrub, clearing the ground a space of about fifty square feet around the grave. While the younger men were doing this, the older ones were carrying up to me the lime and sand that I might mix the mortar. Naling and his people were busy preparing food for us all. By working hard from about ten in the morning till sundown, we had the ground well cleared and a substantial concrete wall, about two feet thick, built right round the grave in the form of the letter "G". We also cut a rough road from the grave to the shore. Our work over, we went to the sea-shore, and camped just beside the stream, where Naling had the piping-hot food all spread out on green cocoanut leaves. I asked a blessing on the food, and then told my party that they had better tie it all up and eat it as we walked home, for darkness was coming on and we had a weary tramp before us. I thanked Naling and his people, and gave him the charge of keeping the grave well tended. This he did faithfully as long as he was teacher at Potnuma. We had not gone a mile along the shore when I felt so tired that I could not keep up any longer, but threw myself down on the black sand and went fast asleep. They soon roused me, fearing that I might catch cold, as my clothes were soaked with wet. Seldom have I been more fatigued. Some one may ask, "What about the men, then? were they not also tired as you?" Yes, the *young* men *were* tired; they had worked well; but like all natives, took good care to sit down frequently and rest and eat food. As for the *old* men, a spurt of an


hour or so satisfied them, and the rest of the time they were busy sleeping and drinking cocoanuts. As we walked along the road, the young men gathered old, dry cocoanut leaves, and quickly twisted and tied them in long rolls for torches, which were soon needed. These dry leaves make excellent torches. No white man can carry and trim them as a native can, and when a crowd of two or three hundred people are passing, as I have often seen them, in single file along a winding mountain path, every tenth man, perhaps, brandishing one of these blazing faggots, the effect is most picturesque. By ten o'clock that night we arrived at Cook's Bay, all as wearied as we cared to be, and I, myself, too tired to eat. But, after a wash and a good long rest, I felt quite ready for the cosy supper that Mrs. Robertson had made ready; it was the first food I had eaten for about eighteen hours.

Before our house was quite finished, I met with a painful accident. I was cutting rafters one morning; Nofon was holding the wood, and managed somehow to let it slip. I brought the adze down with a slashing blow on my leg, and the blood literally spouted out. Poor Nofon was miserable and full of remorse over his share in the accident. Besides the great pain, it kept me back from my work and I was able to do almost nothing for a long time.

That same afternoon word came from Potnuma that the heathen had killed Naling Puruput, our teacher. The poor fellow used to take fits of insanity, but when these were over he was as right as any man. From what we heard, his mind seemed quite to have given way now. Fortunately, it turned out that the report was exaggerated. Naling was not killed, though he had been severely wounded. His friends had sent for me,



but of course I was helpless and could scarcely move ; so I could only do my best by sending healing appliances and plenty of nourishing food. We afterwards learned that, when his mind became affected, he believed that he had been commanded to stop heathenism everywhere. He took with him Bonkora, a poor-looking, gawkish fellow, and some other companions, and went first to interview some old men at a village near by. He told them that if they did not give up heathenism he would shoot them ! They were so frightened that they promised anything, and made him a present of two pigs. He next reached a feasting-ground where yams had been tied up to poles in preparation for a feast. Naling cut everything away, and passed on to the next village, Sumprim, his followers increasing all the time. I suppose a number of them went out of sheer curiosity to see what he would do next. At Sumprim he cut down all the yams belonging to the young chief, who was roused at once into anger. By this time Naling was exhausted ; he had walked a long distance, and had been *busy* all the time, but when the young chief came in a rage to the *siman-lo*,<sup>2</sup> in the public square, where he was resting, Naling sprang to his feet, saying : " I am glad to see some one who is worthy of me ; the rest are cowards ; come here, my friend, and we will set-to ". The young man had both an axe and a spear ; Naling's only weapon was a rough stick, but he had been a splendid fighter in his young days, and had no fear now. He parried all the blows of his assailant, and at last, with a dexterous grip, broke his axe-handle. Then he gave the man a good hiding with his switch. Suddenly he turned his back on him, and covered his face. The poor fellow was quite confused and scarcely knew what he was doing, but his cowardly foe, who had been thoroughly beaten, flew for another axe, and in another



second had given Naling a deep blow, cutting right into the muscles of his back. Naling said: "Go on; I am not afraid". The man then, fearing that he had mortally wounded him, made off for his life, but one of Naling's friends, Nokilian, ran after him, caught him, and would have killed him, but Naling forbade it. Nokilian tied *ūrūves* leaves on the wound, and the injured man, leaning on his friend's arm, managed to walk home. He had the pluck of a dozen men. He got well again, but, of course, I had to take him away from that place.

It was this same man, Naling, who, a long time after this, was our goat-herd at Dillon's Bay. When well, he was most painstaking, and gave every satisfaction. He was full of fun—a ready wit. On one occasion we had gone to spend some months at Potnariven (Portinia Bay), and were still away when poor Naling, it seems, became queer again. He turned the goats out at two o'clock in the morning, and then walked across and rang the church bell. When at last he managed to wake the people that morning, he told them that it was high time they were all up, and insisted on their going to church. He himself went up into the pulpit to address them. However, Atnelo, the teacher, persuaded him to come down from that, and told him that, if he chose, he might stand on the floor and speak to them. Atnelo said to us that the poor man talked utter foolishness, and yet seemed highly pleased with himself.

Later in the day, seeing that the natives were closely watching him, he was clever enough to know that they suspected him of trying to set fire to the Mission premises, and, highly insulted, he took up his battle-axe and went straight to Unōva, his own land (on the east side of the island), and made things generally lively there. I felt sure that I could manage him, and was

glad when one day later on he showed face, having come specially to see us. Poor fellow! though quite out of his mind at the time, he seemed to realise that he had been behaving badly, and had evidently come to explain matters. When he appeared at the door of the room where we were sitting, Mrs. Robertson, who was nearest, rose to shake hands with him. Scarcely looking at her, Naling pompously waved her aside, then walked along and knelt down in front of me, his head touching the ground, all the time shaking one foot at Mrs. Robertson to make her keep at a respectful distance.

His position was too ludicrous, yet we fortunately managed to keep our countenances. But it was too much for some of the young people who saw it, and they foolishly teased the poor man. Nauvi, however, had the good sense to insist on their leaving him alone.

On a later day, when I was preparing to go to Unōva, our people begged me to take Naling with me. "You can manage him, Misi," they said; "we can't." He seemed quite right again for a little, until one time he slipped away from the men with whom he had been walking, and put his arm round a young girl's neck. Of course, this would never do; the girl screamed, and her friends were angry, but we managed to get him back with us, and all was right until we entered the bush at Potnuma. Here Naling suggested a diversion. "Look here! Mr. Robertson," he said; "suppose you and I give these people an English song." And he began roaring a wild thing that was neither English nor Erromangan, and even though I might have wanted to help, I had to confess my inability to do so. Both music and words were far beyond me. He was swinging in his hand a very pretty little club, and presently, catching sight of a snake, killed it with a single blow. He took it up by the tail, whirled it round his head,

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and threw it into the bush, then broke his club in two and sent the pieces after the snake. Then, with a merry twinkle in his eye, he turned to me: "Now, Misi, I have killed the Devil; you will have no more trouble from him".

By the time we reached Unōva, Naling was pretty much exhausted, but seemed quite sane, and that night he slept well. The next morning he took another fit. I was returning to Potnariven, and Bonkor and the other people at Unōva hoped that Naling would go too. They were afraid of having him there lest the heathen might revenge themselves on him. When I spoke to Naling about it, he said: "If they kill me, they kill me on my own land. I have no fear. They will shed my blood on my own soil and my father's soil. You go home, Misi; I will stay here; I dare them to touch me." Then Bonkor, looking as stupid and ungainly as he could, walked up to Naling, and used all his persuasive eloquence to get him to return with me. In the middle of his speech a great lout of a dog appeared on the scene. Naling gave one look at Bonkor, his eyes flashing, then clenched his fist, and with one blow sent the dog howling into the bush. I burst into roars of laughter. And that stupid Bonkor, whom one would expect to take this as a warning, actually went up to speak again. He was wearing an enormous Queensland hat, which did not improve his appearance, for he was one of the most gawkish-looking fellows I have ever seen. Naling gave him a contemptuous look, then suddenly rose, snatched the hat from the side of his head, gave him a smart clout on the ear, and sent the hat where he had sent the dog a minute before.

I said: "Come now, Naling, the man that could give a blow like that and send a dog flying over everybody's heads into the bush is the man for me. I have a bag

here that I would not trust any one with but you; I want it carried safely to Potnariven."

"All right, Misi," he said, and without a moment's delay snatched up the bag and was off. He took the lead, shouting and singing as he walked. Then all of a sudden he stopped, and twisting the bag into the air he threw it from him, and then sat down on the sand. "You go on," he said; "I am going to stop here." "Very well," I replied; "just as you please; but be sure you don't forget that bag when you come. I don't want any one but you to carry it." Without a word he rushed into the scrub, picked up the bag, and clutching it tightly in his arms, set off again, never stopping to look round once. By the time we reached Potnariven he was as fresh as a trout, and his mind quite clear again.

On the very morning that the *Dayspring* hove in sight on her return from Sydney, just as we were having family worship, we heard a great noise of angry voices outside our house. I sprang to my feet, and was out in a moment. I found old Lifu struggling to free himself from some men who were holding him and calling out, "*Nate! nate!* 'father!' don't." He was swinging his battle-axe round his head and shouting, "Let me get at him, the *natemas*," while his worthy son was pointing his gun anywhere within twenty feet of his father, and saying: "Come on here, you fellow; *I* have something ready for you". Both men were trembling with anger and weakness, and the bystanders, who could have carried both away easily, were making matters worse by holding them and calling "Don't, don't!" I shoved them off, and led poor old Lifu, who was a rank heathen, into the house, and made him sit down; then, leaving him in Mrs. Robertson's care, I darted out to his son, a professing Christian, and ordered him to give up the

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gun instantly, and to sit down and stay there until I inquired into the cause of the trouble. Leaving several men with young Lifu I went into our house again. Mrs. Robertson had made some tea for old Lifu, but his hands were trembling so that he could not hold the bowl. So I took it from him, and, while I fed him with bread and tea, I managed to learn from him the cause of the disturbance.

It was this: The son had borrowed his father's rifle, and had left it in his own house while he went to work in his plantation. Some little children had carelessly kindled a fire near that house, and were roasting yams and bread-fruit. Soon the grass hut caught fire, and before anything could be done was burned to the ground. Of course the gun was ruined, and, as compensation, Lifu determined to take his son's life. The story was confirmed by all the men who were outside. Lifu added: "I will not kill my son now, because of my love for you two (Mrs. Robertson and myself); I do not want to grieve your hearts". (Then aside, as if speaking to himself, "Oh! who will give me nice food and hot tea when they are gone?") "But as soon as you leave and reach Umbongkora (Dillon's Bay), I will kill him." Our time was precious, a human life more so, and I promised before them all that if he, Lifu, the old chief, would take a vow (by cutting a sapling, etc., *more suo*) not to harm his son nor any other person, nor destroy property, I would get Captain Braithwaite to buy him a good, new, double-barrelled gun. He kept his vow, and I kept my word, and on the *Dayspring's* return from New Zealand the following trip, Lifu got his new gun. When I gave it to him, all his anger had spent itself, and, being amiably disposed to the Mission, he, by deed, gifted a fine bit of land for a church and school-

house in a better and less exposed position than where the church had stood.

The *Dayspring's* boat, with the second officer and a crew of four white men, had come in for us ; the *Dayspring* herself was miles out at sea, and soon it was time for us to leave. From our anxiety over the disturbance between Lifu and his son, neither Mrs. Robertson nor I had been able to eat much ; the children, especially Gordon, were suffering with fever, and everything seemed against us. We were taking with us to Dillon's Bay a dear old man named Nerimpau, who had been most kind to us during our stay, had been to see us every day, and had never come empty-handed. We all had reason to remember that weary morning in the boat. If the mate had not been as stubborn and heartless as a heathen Erromangan, he would have ordered his men to strike sail and pull us to the ship, which could easily have been done in two or three hours. Instead of this, with a big cargo boat, and without a jib or any head-sail, he tried to *beat out* against a considerable sea, and the wind dead ahead. I suggested his taking down the sail and pulling, offering to take an oar myself, as my wife and children were suffering. But as there was a sail there it must be up, not because it was of any use, but because it was a boat-sail. He sat there abusing the captain, saying he should have brought the vessel right into the bay instead of fooling about half-way to Aniwa.

I said : " You are right, every other vessel comes right in ; but she has *not* come in, and what we have to do now is to get to her. You will never get there as you are now doing, trying to beat against such a wind and sea as this and with only a standing lug-sail." I could bear it no longer ; our poor children's little arms



were covered with huge blisters from the scorching sun, and they and their mother were worn-out and miserable. Poor old Nerimpau was sea-sick. I said: "I ask you once more to take down that sail and pull us to the vessel, or my child will die. If you refuse, I demand to be put ashore again. I won't stand this another minute." There was no response to that, and then I turned to Chessell, an old man-o'-war sailor, who was twitching about in pent-up wrath at the mate's conduct, and said: "Mr. Chessell, you are a brave man and a gentleman; can you suffer this cruelty to my wife and children to continue?" Quick as lightning old Chessell sprang to his feet. "Down sail! down mast! now out with your oars and into your seats," dropping into his own seat as he spoke; he was stroke. "Now, boys! give way, and let us get on board with this lady and her sick children. I beg your pardon, sir," as, getting firmly seated and making a long sweep with his oar, he kicked the mate on the shin; "very sorry, sir!" Soon the old boat began to go ahead. We reached the *Dayspring* at two o'clock in the afternoon, and in the only way we could get there in that boat—by rowing, and that with our might.

When we got alongside, I was nearly as annoyed with the captain for giving us such a long pull as I was with the mate for adding to the time, making it six hours when three would have been enough. Captain Braithwaite took in the whole situation, sprang to help Mrs. Robertson and the children out of the boat, and called to the steward for mattresses and pillows. These and a basin of warm water and towels were at once brought, and the captain hurried away to get soothing applications for the poor blistered arms. Soon we were all comfortably settled on deck, and Captain Braithwaite, knowing well a missionary's longing for home news,



smoothed away my last feelings of resentment by bringing forward a huge mail bag, filled with letters and papers, which he poured out on the deck beside us. Who could help being fond of that man? At times he would just belch out at some of us, storming away as if he would take the roof off our heads, or, as I suppose it would be more in keeping to say, the deck from under our feet. But in a very short time, his annoyance over, he could not do enough to make up for the outburst, and would be talking away cheerily to the very ones he had been assailing right and left a minute before. With Captain Braithwaite there were *squalls*—thundering ones, too, now and again—but they were sharp and soon over.

Before long the *Dayspring* was lying calmly at anchor in Dillon's Bay; we were home again, and all our troubles forgotten—blotted out by kindness. How beautifully neat and clean our house here looked! Our faithful old Ohai had taken such care of everything. The rooms seemed enormous, and the house a palace after our tiny cottage at Cook's Bay. We were grateful, indeed, to be back again.

In January of the next year, 1876, a month after our return to Dillon's Bay, Novolu Teruvat paid a long-promised visit to the fierce, heathen people of Unepang. He could safely go there on account of his relationship to some of them. I fancy his mother was an Unepang woman, and I know that two of Netai's wives were from that district. He saw the chiefs and people, spoke to them of the *nam*,<sup>8</sup> of Christ and His love for them and tried to get them to promise to take a teacher. Again and again this good man walked over those rough hills to see his heathen friends. And later, several of the Christian chiefs from the west side of the island

visited Unepang, among them Avoli, the chief of Rampunumunchasau, and Uven, the chief of Rampunumo. These friendly visits were returned by Nalial, one of the principal chiefs of the district round South River, and very soon the way seemed to open up for the placing of a teacher at Unarevin, a village about a mile north of South River. Had we been fortunate in obtaining a good man for that village, the results of his settlement would have been apparent to this day, but Avoli Namli, the teacher, had no heart for his work. He got into disputes with the people, and at last one day, gathering his odds and ends together, he and his wife left Unarevin and returned home.

For about two years after, we were not able to fill the vacancy. However, during 1879, the way seemed to be opening up again. With a party of eighty men, I went to Rampunumo, had a good reception there, and placed a teacher named Lōvō among the people. We were to spend the night at the village, and intended the next day to pass on to Unarevin and settle there Umo, a fine young man, who had been attending my class for some time and who gave every evidence of being a sincere Christian. At Rampunumo I was interested in seeing a feature of Erromangan etiquette. Though we had been well received by the chiefs Uven and his brother Uvsori, most of the people all around were heathen, and not always to be trusted. However, they busied themselves in getting and preparing food for our party, and the women were sent to the plantations to bring cocoanut, *tampoli*,<sup>4</sup> *dau*,<sup>5</sup> and several other requisites for cooking. Our men were sitting in a circle chatting together, when one of them caught sight of the women returning. At a sign from him every man rose. They stood shoulder to shoulder, with their backs to the road, looking neither to the right nor left, and

in perfect silence kept in that position till the women with their huge bundles and sweeping skirts had passed them all. Then, as quickly, they seated themselves, and went on with their talk as if nothing had interrupted them. This custom was evidently to prevent jealousy arising; unless he looked over his shoulder, no man could possibly see the women, and therefore could have no fear of rousing the anger of their husbands and friends.

During the whole night we were at Rampunumo some of our party kept watch, for fear of a surprise from the heathen. The following morning we prepared to say good-bye to Lovo, and the chiefs who had taken him under their protection, and to set out for Unarevin. But just a little before we were to start, a man named Umas, a friendly heathen, who lived very near Unarevin, arrived with a present for me of two yams and a *plucked living fowl*. I thanked him for his kind thoughtfulness, but spoke to him very strongly of the cruelty of plucking a fowl before it was killed. He gave a peculiar smile, but made no reply. Later on I spoke to Naling, the chief of Dillon's Bay, about it. "*Ko sugku igko*, 'so it is done here,'" was his answer. And then, seeing that I still suspected nothing, he gave me a sharp glance, saying: "*Misi, sī sie sī*, 'there is something,'"—there is more in this than you see. It was not long then till I knew that mischief was being plotted; the heathen of the districts near Unarevin were determined to prevent us going there at any cost. Umas, in honour, could not betray his own people, but had taken this way to let me know what would befall me. The plucked but living fowl was a warning; so would they do to me if I ventured into their land. I had no opportunity of thanking the man; he was gone, and, as he had planned, without speaking a word of warning.

Though Naling had himself explained the danger to me, he was indignant when I told him we would return to Dillon's Bay, taking Umo with us. He was no coward, and was fuming at what seemed to him our weakness in giving in to the heathen. "Who are they?" he said; "how dare they stop us?" I said, "Naling, my friend! it is their land, not ours; and they have a perfect right to refuse to let us enter it; we are not going to force the Gospel down their throats".

The day after we returned to Dillon's Bay, we were followed by Nalial, the chief of Unarevin, who was very angry with the heathen for preventing his teacher going to him. We could easily have taken Umo in the boat and placed him with Nalial in spite of our enemies, but I thought it wrong to anger them; we would have been doing what our people call *tantivi nipmi*, 'cutting their faces off,' which means showing them insult and daring them.

However, during the following year we were allowed, much to our joy, to settle Umo there. At first he had very little help or sympathy, but he gradually won his way into the hearts of the people. They could not fail to notice his earnest devotion to his Master; his gentle, Christian character endeared him to us all, and we felt that we could not have had a better man at that dangerous post. He had been at Unarevin for about two years, and had come for a short visit to Dillon's Bay. Mrs. Lawrie<sup>6</sup> and Mrs. Braithwaite were staying with us at the time; it was the beginning of September. Umo took the prayer meeting that week, and though, of course, they could not understand a word of it, both ladies were charmed with his earnest and eloquent address. Our natives are rarely *eloquent*, but we have known two or three very striking exceptions, and Umo was one. The day after the prayer meeting he left us,

and went on to Rampuntampent to dig up yams that he had planted, intending to go on to Unarevin the next morning.

Meanwhile, the labour vessel<sup>7</sup> *Ceara*, Captain Satine, had appeared off Unoras, further to the south, and two boats were sent ashore. One, in charge of a white man, beached on the south bank of the river, while the other, in charge of a Tanna man, drew in to the north bank. The Tanna man asked some natives who were standing near if he might get out to drink water. They said, "Yes, you are quite safe; see," pointing to the schoolhouse, "Misi comes here".<sup>8</sup> The man jumped out, passed a group of women sitting on the shore, and stooped down by the river bank as if to drink water, but drank none. He then made a spring back to where the women were and tried to catch a young girl, Utokota. She slipped away from him, and he stumbled on the shore; but, as he fell, seeing a man named Yalimyau standing near, he fired at and wounded him. He then made another dash for the girl, who in terror was calling "*Nate, nate!*"<sup>9</sup> He managed to get hold of her, and dragged her screaming into the boat. Lovo, her father, who had heard his child's pitiful cries, at this moment rushed to the boat and, trembling with anger, demanded his daughter back. He was pushed aside, and, seeing that all his talking was useless, he caught up (and who could blame him?) a heavy stone and aimed it at his enemy. At once the scoundrel ordered his men to fire, and in an instant poor Lovo was shot dead, right before his daughter's eyes. What agony of grief and fear that poor girl must have suffered! The boat was at once shoved off, and was well out of range before the alarm could be raised on shore. Meanwhile the other boat had managed to get a young

boy, we never knew whether by fair means or foul. Some distance from the shore the two boats met; the young girl was lifted into the white man's boat, which rowed straight to the ship.

The other boat came down the coast, passed Bunkil, and pulled in to a place about four miles from Dillon's Bay, near the very spot where our poor teacher Umo was busy at his work. With Sorenau, a friend of his, he was putting up the scaffolding for storing his yams, but when they caught sight of the boat they proceeded to go down to the shore and meet it, as they wanted tobacco. Umo also carried a hawk which he had just caught, and thought he might sell it to the strangers. When quite near, Sorenau said he would not go quite up to the boat, but gave Umo a bow and arrows which he was carrying, asking him to try and sell them for him. Umo walked up to the bows of the boat; it was then half-tide, and the boat was in fairly deep water, but quite close to the shore. The Tanna man walked along to the bows, and asked Umo what he wanted for his bird and the bow and arrows. He answered: "I want tobacco". The man then stooped down, picked up five sticks of tobacco and held them out. Umo, all unsuspecting, put out his hand, which was grabbed fiercely. The poor fellow struggled to get free, but all hope was gone. The Tanna man pulled out his revolver and shot him in the side. His victim fell right into the water, but was up in an instant, and made a plunge for the rocks; but the murderer jumped out of the boat and after him, firing several shots as he ran. He need not have done so; the first shot was the fatal one, and in a few seconds our poor Umo lay dying. As he pulled off his boat again, the Tanna man flung out on the shore the five sticks of tobacco.

Sorenau came on to us in great grief the same day.

What a shock the news of this dastardly murder gave us! It seemed hard that one whom we all loved so much, and who during his life had shown such gentle, Christ-like devotion to his work, should be taken from us, murdered, and by one of a crew belonging to an English ship! Sorenau told us nothing of the tragedy at Unepang; he knew nothing of it; so there could have been no connection between the two.

The ship had already passed us, but I felt sure that when he heard of the murder, Captain Satine would turn back. I could not but think that he would be horrified and indignant, and that he would do his best to atone. At daylight next morning, with forty men, I left in the *Yarra-Yarra* for the scene of the tragedy. We had scarcely stepped ashore, when Watata found five sticks of tobacco lying close together near the rocks. I stood by the spot where Umo had died; there were still blood-marks everywhere, and the ground all round had been torn up by the poor man in his death agonies. The wound was a terrible one. We went up to the village, where the body was lying, about two hundred people, principally heathen, sitting round it wailing. I said to Mrs. Robertson afterwards how thankful I felt at the time that these people, though heathen, never for one moment blamed us, the Christian party, for what had happened; they knew well that their grief was ours also. Still I felt keenly that the murder had been committed by men from a British vessel. To the native mind<sup>10</sup> this would mean the same as if the white men had done the deed.

We had a short service, and amid the deepest and most heartfelt grief of all his friends we buried our dear, faithful Umo. When I returned to Dillon's Bay, I was surprised to hear from Mrs. Robertson that there had been no sign of the *Ceara*; the captain had not returned

and evidently had no intention of doing so. We heard afterwards that she went in to Elizabeth Bay. The chief, Nalinewé, knowing nothing of what had taken place, went on board, but saw neither the boy nor the poor girl who had been stolen at Unoras. He said they must have been kept under the hatches. We had by this time heard of the affair at Unoras, and were shocked to find that a double tragedy had taken place on that day. These murders for a time destroyed all our work in the Unepang district, and did serious harm to the Mission on Erromanga. Everything was in confusion again, and it was many a long day before we were allowed to settle another teacher at Unarevin.

When in Sydney, a month or two later, I wrote a short statement of what had taken place, and gave it to Captain (now Rear-Admiral) Bridge, who at once forwarded it to the Admiral. The next day Captain Bridge told me that the Admiral wanted a full account of the murders, with dates and the names of all concerned; this I was able to write before leaving for the home country. When in England, soon after, I attended a meeting of the Committee (in connection with the Admiralty) which presided over affairs in the Western Pacific. Sir Arthur Gordon was in the chair, and Rear-Admirals Hoskins and Wilson, the latter of whom I had already met, were also present. After answering a number of questions relating to our islands and to the labour traffic, I mentioned the case of the *Ceara* at Erromanga. I was asked to write another statement of the whole affair, and assured that the murders would be fully inquired into. I heard afterwards that Captain Satine was dismissed from the labour traffic. As to his conduct in the affair, no one could for one moment hold him responsible for the murders; but surely he was deeply to blame for not, when he heard of them



(which he must have done), returning at once to Dillon's Bay and doing all in his power to atone for the awful deeds. It was a man in his employ who was the author of the tragedy, and as no reparation, no acknowledgment of it even, was made by the captain, we held him responsible for what had been done.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### EXTENSIVE VISITS.—MATCH-MAKING EXTRAORDINARY.

ON the 22nd of March, 1877, our island was visited by one of the most frightsome and destructive hurricanes we have ever known, accompanied by heavy floods wherever there were streams or rivers. The storm had been brewing for some days, and, when the great sea-birds began to fly to the land for shelter, we feared that it might grow wild, though we had no anticipation that it would prove so disastrous as it did. It was about midnight on the fourth day that it reached its height. It was the *sea* that we dreaded most, but, in a little, Yomot came rushing in, crying: "The river! The river is coming; run, Misi, for your lives; give me the child!" We ran, without ever stopping, straight back from our house until we reached a great rock on the hillside. Here we took shelter from the cold, drenching rain. We could hear the noise of the wind and sea, and—what sounded far worse—the awful roar of the swollen river as it rushed past our house. We were uncomfortable in our rough shelter, as it was very much exposed. Our little Tissie was sitting beside me, her lips and face blue with the cold, the rain dripping from the rock on to her head. She understood Erromangan better than English, and I said, "*Atekisah, Tissie!* 'strive on, Tissie!'" keep up your heart. "Yes," she answered, her teeth chattering; and the poor child did keep up bravely throughout it all.

When the storm seemed to have lessened a little, Mrs. Robertson and I ventured down the hill, and Watata very kindly gave up his house to us for the time. We made fires, and Mrs. Robertson put the children to sleep and tried to get a little rest herself. I found my way over to the store-room of our own house, and managed to get some dry blankets. But the smoke in kind Watata's house was almost suffocating, and none of us were very comfortable there, though it was very much better to be there than out in the storm.

In the morning, with some of the men, I went to our house to see what could be done. One room was blown to the ground, and a great deal of the thatch was off the roof on the east side. We actually could not get into the house, until the men cut and dragged away the trees and huge branches that had fallen everywhere. The rooms were in a woful state, with mud and leaves inches thick on the floors. Things seemed hopelessly ruined. However, we set to work at once and tackled one room. The men cleared away all the mud and rubbish; then we heated plenty of water and washed the floor, until it began to look something like what it had been the day before. I did not want Mrs. Robertson to come near the place until we had made things fairly presentable. I had beds and a table carried in, and that evening we had a cosy tea in that room. The children were soon in bed and asleep, and everything, as we looked round, seemed so clean and comfortable again that we could scarcely realise that we had been homeless the night before. We did not venture to go into any of the other rooms; they were in a shocking state, and it was weeks before they began to look better.

At Cook's Bay, our new cottage was smashed into match-wood. When the people there saw my house go down they knew, they said, that there was no hope

for theirs, and took to the caves. Not a single native hut was left standing. Two people were killed by falling trees. Netai Neseto, the old chief, was caught up into the air by the force of the wind and carried some distance inland; and had it not been for the long dress-coat which he fortunately had on at the time, and to which his friends clung, he would have been carried off the island altogether! So they said. Both at Cook's Bay and Dillon's Bay, thousands of tons of timber were swept down from the mountains. The whole beach at the head of Cook's Bay was completely blocked; for it was the largest inland trees that had been carried down and now lay in great banks upon each other. At Dillon's Bay it was different, for there the timber was swept right out into the bay. But the westerly sea that came with the later hurricane of January, 1879, raised the huge logs again and flung them up on the shore, literally covering every part of the beach from far-off Umpon-lū, on the north side of the bay, to the mouth of the river. Here, too, as at Cook's Bay, there was scarcely a hut left standing, and the old lime schoolhouse, built by James Gordon, was washed away bodily. Strange to say, the wooden tablet there, with the inscription to the memory of the martyrs, which was fastened to one of the walls, was not lost; we found it afterwards buried beneath sand and mud and plaster.

The saddest part of the havoc caused by the flood was the death of an old man—Woki. He must have been swept out to sea in his hut, for he was never seen after the storm began. A young woman named Navuso had a very narrow escape from drowning. She was sleeping in a small hut some distance up the valley, just near the bend of the river, and awoke to find herself in great danger—the water rushing all around her. It was a wonder that she was not killed by the falling

hut, for with it she was caught in the torrent and was being carried swiftly away. The mass of broken limbs of trees and the ruins of the house all around her suddenly stopped; she felt something strong and solid near her and clung to it for dear life. In a minute, the logs and trees were caught up again by the rushing waters, and the woman, as if by a miracle, was left. She found herself about eight feet from the ground, clinging to a large bread-fruit tree. As soon as the danger was past she came down, and crept into a cave. Here her friends found her, and in the morning word came to Mrs. Robertson from Navuso begging for some clothes to cover her. The natives, as a rule, sleep <sup>1</sup> with very little on them; the poor woman probably had only a small grass skirt on her when she was carried away, and that must have been torn from her by the flood. Mrs. Robertson at once sent garments up to her. We were amazed to hear of what she had passed through during that awful night; hers was, indeed, a miraculous escape from death.

At this time, the river swept away many graves of natives, and cut so close to the bank where the graves of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon and Mr. Macnair were that I had to move them back to the rising ground, about fifty yards away. Neither flood nor tidal wave can ever touch them there. What work we had after this storm in repairing our buildings, walls, and roofs! The stone wall in front had to be rebuilt, as it had all been torn away by the flood. There is now a big stretch of very low land at a place we call Undam, more than a mile up the valley, which has only been formed since that time. The high land thereabout was literally shorn away, and this flat, with the old mud waste left by the flood as its foundation, has grown up since. I believe that what saved us all from being swept into the sea

was the projecting high rock on the north bank of the river at the bathing place, which turned the course of the rushing waters and thus gave them a "sheer" across the stream, from which point they cut their way towards the sea, covering the point of land on the south side, where the river enters the bay.

About this time, I am sorry to say, some of our people behaved very strangely, doing nothing that was actually wrong, but showing us little sympathy, just when we needed it so much. A few were our good friends throughout, and helped us manfully with all that had to be done. In April the *Dayspring* arrived from Sydney,<sup>2</sup> and what a treat it was to see her, especially, I suppose, as we had had so little brightness and cheer before her arrival. The people now seemed really ashamed of their conduct, and could not do enough to make up for the past unkindness. The *Dayspring* came early—some days before she was expected. I remember, all that afternoon, I had the strange feeling that a ship was near, and said to Mrs. Robertson: "We must keep a sharp look-out on that point; I feel sure that the *Dayspring* is near". Towards evening, taking Owang with me, I went up to the hill at the back of the house and along to the north of the bay, to see if I could find any trace of our goats. Naiwan, our herd, had taken ill, the flock had strayed, and we were without milk. After a long, fruitless search, I said to Owang that I would go back, and suggested that he should have another look before following me. It was getting quite dark then. Owang was down almost as soon as I was, and, to my delight, had found the goats and brought them. I was hurrying across to the yard with a jug for the milk when Lō-itevau called to me, and, with a smile, pointed out seawards. There was our little *Dayspring* just coming round the southern point; I was right, after all. Of

course, there was great excitement then, but no time wasted in getting ready for her. I got Yomot to take me out in a canoe, and soon we were near the ship. By this time it was quite dark; we could scarcely see the vessel. I called out and there was an answer at once from the deck. Captain Braithwaite said he felt sure it was my voice the moment he heard it, though it seemed to be coming from the rocks half-way between the river and the southern point. So it was; for we were paddling close to Raumpong, keeping well in to the shore. I called again: "Captain Braithwaite, take care of your ship; the whole bay is full of snags". The vessel was being towed, and soon we managed to get on board. Captain Braithwaite introduced me to his wife, who was having her first trip to the islands. I intended to stay on board the ship, for I had a notion that, if I left her, the captain would turn out to sea again till morning, and the danger was not so great as to require that. The ship needed careful handling that was all; and I thought it well to warn him. Soon we were safely over to the anchorage. I had no fear of him slipping away now, and, with a promise from the captain and his wife to come on shore in the morning, I said good-bye, taking, of course, the ever-important mail-bag with me in my canoe.

The next morning, I again went in the canoe with Naling, but to Raumpong first; after holding a short service there, which had been arranged for some time previously, I went on board the *Dayspring*. Naling brought the canoe on shore, and I came with Captain and Mrs. Braithwaite in the ship's boat. We had a delightful visit from our friends, and thought the captain indeed fortunate in his wife, who, with her sweet face and kind manner, made friends wherever she went. Our memories of both Captain and Mrs. Braithwaite are very,

very pleasant ones. The captain was in command of the *Dayspring*, having been chief officer for two years previously. For fourteen years he held that position, till she was sold in 1890, when the transit work of the Mission was given to a steamship company of Sydney, whose steamers now visit the Mission stations on our islands every two months, and will make more frequent trips when the trade grows. Our natives all respected, as well as loved him, and well they might; for he was always kind and considerate to them. He knew them all by name, although not always the right name, and never failed to give them a friendly greeting. And I think I need scarcely say that, in spite of failings—and who among us has not his shortcomings?—we all loved and honoured our bluff old captain. Botany was his hobby, and all his spare moments were given to this pursuit. He made a fine collection of specimens, and had no trouble in getting the natives to search for plants, for they knew he always paid them well.

As for Mrs. Braithwaite, one has only to go to those who knew her well, to hear her spoken of as she deserves. Hers was one of the sweetest, brightest characters we have ever known. Mrs. Robertson loved to have her near, and counts the friendship with Mrs. Braithwaite, as I am sure many others of the ladies of our Mission must do, as one of the sweet memories of her life. She always had a tender love for children, and was a very mother to them all when they were on board ship; nothing done for their pleasure was a trouble. We have known her to take entire charge of the little ones, when their mothers were ill and unable to look after them. We used to say that the *Dayspring* would not have been the *Dayspring* at all without Mrs. Braithwaite, for she could smooth away the rough jars



that her husband sometimes made, and we all felt, as he must have felt himself, that the captain owed much of his success to her gentleness and loving tact. Mrs. Robertson, and, I suppose, the other wives of the missionaries too, knew how well she could do their shopping for them in Sydney, and many were the commissions that she was entrusted with. In the tiny, trig cabin in the *Dayspring* there were on every trip parcels upon parcels coming hitherward, and nothing was ever forgotten. Mrs. Robertson used to say what a comfort it was to be able to tell Mrs. Braithwaite exactly what she wanted to buy and to know that she would get that very thing or something better, if it was to be had. I have no doubt that they all did find it "such a comfort"; for they could scarcely expect the old captain to be flying around from one bargain counter to another all the time the ship was in Sydney.

And, in the children's eyes, Mrs. Braithwaite was an ideal woman. Did not every one of them, from one end of the group to the other, get twice a year one of those wonderful tins, or perhaps, better still, odd-shaped, old-fashioned bags, made of straw work and bright silks and filled with pink and white sweets—not too indigestible and yet not too wholesome—just what they had been dreaming about for six months before.<sup>3</sup> We did not think that this feature of our friend's visits was particularly noticed by the children themselves, until one day, when Mrs. Robertson and I were speaking of all Mrs. Braithwaite's good qualities, our then baby, Annie, who was about five years old, added as her special tribute of praise: "And she never comes empty-handed". However, after all, I fancy that the presents had very little to do with it, and the biggest share of their child-love was for the kind giver herself. I am quite sure that to our children Captain and Mrs. Braithwaite came next

to their own father and mother. When they were away from us at school in Sydney, it was Mrs. Braithwaite who could tell us all that we were longing to hear about them ; for she always went to see them when there, and it was still the children's greatest treat to spend a day now and again on the little ship in Sydney harbour. The *Dayspring*, with the captain and his wife, was almost to them a home again. We felt very much the sad deaths of our friends a few years ago—in 1895. Mrs. Braithwaite was taken first, and, only a few days after, her husband followed her.

During this year (1877) the Synod kindly placed the *Dayspring* at my disposal that I might make visits right round Erromanga. There was a fortnight of her time to spare, and that was too short for a voyage among the other islands. I was very glad to have this splendid chance of paying a visit to all the coast districts where I was likely to be received. Captain Braithwaite did his part admirably, running into the bays with the vessel as close as it was considered safe. As soon as the boat left with us, the *Dayspring* would stand out again, till we were ready to leave the shore, when she would come in to pick us up. At all the districts where we had teachers, they were ready for us. They had arrowroot bulbs<sup>4</sup> in baskets, neatly packed for taking in the ship to Dillon's Bay ; and besides this, there were fowls, clubs, bows and arrows, sandal-wood and money, which, at my request, they were contributing towards the cost of printing the Acts of the Apostles.

Leaving Dillon's Bay, we went south, and then worked round to the east. While on shore at Bunkil a heavy thunderstorm came on, accompanied by an earthquake and rain ; this seemed to clear the weather for us, and we were fortunate in having it very fine throughout the

trip. I had a grand visit to the crowds of people at Numpū-norowo, and spent the whole day with them. In the evening, the great Norowo himself—the high chief in honour of whom the district received its name—and a party of his men went off to the ship with me, and spent the night on board. They were landed the next morning after a huge breakfast of rice, meat and tea, but not before Captain Braithwaite had made them presents of small looking-glasses, fish-hooks, calico and knives. The chief offered the captain, with whom he seemed very much taken, *two coal-black wives* if he would only go on shore and live with him. When the captain laughingly asked, "What about Mrs. Braithwaite?" Norowo answered, "Oh! bring her too; that would only be three". The old chief was greatly interested and evidently much flattered by his own reflection in the large mirror in the saloon. He was dressed in—well, we'll say, an *undress* uniform, for that sounds well at any rate; and how he did twist and squirm in front of that glass! trying to see all round his body at one glance. He would smile and laugh like a young child, and occasionally turn round and jerk his thumb to his men, evidently eager to see if they were as charmed with his appearance as he was himself. They were all in great distress when they found that they were to be landed at a spot where the people were not friendly. I told Captain Braithwaite, and he at once gave orders that they should be landed as near as possible to their own village. I went with them and saw them safely on shore, much charmed with their visit to the ship and seemingly prepared to be more friendly to the Mission cause.

When we had finished all our work, right round to the extreme north point of Portinia Bay, the weather became unsettled. As the captain, his officers and men

had all done so much to help me so far, and as I had been able to visit such a number of the shore villages, I said to Captain Braithwaite that he might now head his vessel to Dillon's Bay; I would finish visiting the other districts by walking to them later on. During this trip, a number of young boys and girls that I met at the different villages wanted to return with me and attend my school, but, with one exception, their friends prevented them. This was a little girl who cried so and begged to come that they allowed her, and I promised them that they might come and take her home again at the end of the year, when we were to go off for a time to Sydney. Mrs. Braithwaite stayed with Mrs. Robertson while we were away round the island in the *Dayspring*, and had an alarming experience of earthquake while on shore. While we only felt one shock at Bunkil, where we were, Mrs. Robertson said there must have been a hundred during that same day here.

Mrs. Braithwaite was quite unnerved; for no sooner had they got over one shock than there would come another and another. From what the captain and I heard on our return, it seems that his wife and my wife had been busy running into each other's arms every few minutes, and each time in a different room! The severest shock came during the night, and hurled a number of books from the bookcase clean across Mrs. Braithwaite's bed on to the floor. Nothing would induce her to sleep alone in that room after that night.

After spending a fortnight at home, I started, with a company of fourteen men and two women, to visit the different settlements on the north side of the island. The first morning we got to Sufa and Navwolū, and then went on to a small lot of huts on the table-land back from Eliza-

beth Bay, where a number of men had encamped while tending Naliniwé, the chief, who was ill. Of course his three wives were with him, and when we arrived they were all busy preparing dainties to tempt their husband's appetite. However, I noticed that most of it was eaten by the chief's brother, son, and other men of the place. Naliniwé—always the perfect gentleman<sup>5</sup>—received me and my party very graciously, and, though sick, was careful to instruct the men about him what food they were to get for us, giving special directions about my portion. Yams and bananas were soon brought in, a pig and fowls were killed, and in a little time about twenty people were busy preparing our supper. When the evening meal was over, I talked with the people about "the word," and found the chief and others very willing listeners. Then before sleeping, they, with my own people, all gathered together, and we had an evening hymn and prayer in Naliniwé's big *siman-lo*.<sup>6</sup> The next morning I wrote down the names of all, and then said good-bye. I had ridden thus far, but, as it would be impossible to take the horse on any further, owing to the dense scrub and bad roads, I had to leave my mount, "Bessie"—Mr. Gordon's old mare—in charge of the chief. Naling, his brother, was to look well after the bridle and saddle, but, being a practical young heathen, he bestowed all his care upon the choke-band, because he found it made a very nice belt. We managed to get it back from him, some time afterwards—very black and well varnished with dirt. Some years after, this man, Naling Sorumpat, became a sincere Christian, loving to do that which was right, and on our return from Canada he was made a teacher. He kept this position until his death a short time ago, and throughout was one of our most faithful, gentle and generous-hearted helpers. Naliniwé was to have joined our

party at Elizabeth Bay, but, as he was too ill to do this, an old man named Auwi-auwi kindly offered to take his place and introduce me to the heathen chiefs along the coast, who were Naliniwé's friends. But poor Auwi-auwi became so fatigued after a day or two of walking that I persuaded him to turn back, saying that we would find our own way to the different encampments. Towards evening we all got very hungry, and it was with relief that we caught sight of a plantation in the distance. But, when we came near the premises, there was no one to be seen, no one to give us anything. We soon found a way out of the difficulty. We knew the man to whom the plantation belonged, and so we cut as much sugar-cane as we wanted, and *left* the pay for him. I tied up our payment—tobacco and matches—in my handkerchief, and was fastening it to a tree, when an old woman appeared on the scene. She gave us plenty of sugar-cane and fruit, and took the pay for the owner, who happened to be a friend of hers. Not long after that, we arrived at Pokil, a village some distance away, where Numpurom was chief. He was still in heathenism, but often attended services at another village on the table-land of Il-Efaté, where we had a teacher. He gave us a friendly welcome, and began at once to have food prepared for us. I called him back, and said: "Numpurom, my friend! we are all hungry and faint; yams, and puddings, and sugar-cane are very good, but we want something else, too; we want *fan nevag nelat*, 'something that walks on the ground and that grunts'." He laughed, and walking off to where a great fat pig was feeding in a pen, he pointed it out to his men, telling them to kill it at once. It was evidently being fed for a *nisekar* or 'feast,' and I thought it was very good of this heathen chief to give it up to us so willingly. My people knew that I should not

be able to eat the pork if it was cooked as they cook it. There were two women with us, Namrip and Nuferuvi, and the latter, with her husband, Molep, set to work at once to prepare a savoury dish for me. They took the liver and a few slices of the pork itself, and, after washing them in a large banana leaf, cut them into fine pieces. Then these, with a junk or two of fat and a little salt, were put into a small, freshly cut bamboo,<sup>8</sup> and this was carefully turned over a glowing fire until the contents were thoroughly cooked. I suppose it was partly because I was so hungry, but I don't think I ever enjoyed a meal more than I did that night. The meat was cooked to perfection, and the bamboo gave it a peculiar flavour, which seemed to improve it rather than otherwise.

One man, whom I was very anxious to see this trip was Narai, the old chief of Potnifi. Nuferuvi, his daughter, and her husband being both in our party, I thought that by their help I might get my wish. I heard that he had never even seen a white man, and that he stood in mortal terror of me. If we could only get Narai to be friendly it would mean much; for he had a strong influence over all the northern chiefs, that is to say, a bad influence. When we were within a mile or so of the village, it was suggested that Nuferuvi and Molep should go on ahead and find out if the old man would be willing to see me. In a little, a message came back saying that he would not see me. I tried again and sent word that I would not expect to take his hand, I would merely look at him. But again a decided "No" was the answer. The third time my messenger went, I sent a small present, but even this did not pave the way for me. Word came back that Narai had accepted it, but was *norigi sat*, 'ashamed and sorry,' that he could not receive me; it was not that he was

*nakan*, 'angry,' but he was afraid<sup>9</sup> that he would surely take ill and die if he even looked at me. I was determined to get a glimpse of him ; so, pulling off my boots and socks, I slipped very quietly along, picking my way through the scrub until I came to his camp. From behind a fence made of dracænas I got a really good view of the old man. He was sitting on a mat, my present beside him, and quite close to him was a bow and arrows, which, it turned out afterwards, were meant for me. Niferuvi and Molep were standing beside him talking to him ; the old chief was looking up, seeming to have no eyes for any one but his child. Our woman Namrip was standing right in front, between him and the fence behind which I was crouching, and, although I could see him plainly, I was completely hidden from his view by Namrip's enormous grass skirts. Unfortunately, after a second or two, she moved, and, before I could do anything, old Narai had seen me, and was off like a rocket. He flew like a wild moose-deer to the bush, and it was only when his friends assured him that I was far away, that he plucked up courage to come back. He was evidently deeply superstitious, and in real terror of me and my supposed witchcraft.

We journeyed round day after day as far as Potnuma, where we more than completed the districts not visited by me in the *Dayspring*. From Potnuma we struck inland to Arawau, where our teacher Soso was doing excellent work. At Potnuma one of my men, Neraipau, asked me to allow him to turn back several miles, that he might try and get his wife, who had been stolen from him by the heathen while he was away working in Fiji for the *short* space of seven years. His pay<sup>10</sup> there, when his term was over, was a box, a blanket and two muskets, one of which had no bore in it—solid throughout! A ship was leaving for Erromanga, and



he was told that it was his only chance to get home. So home he came with his *valuables*, having no time to look at them even until he had scrambled on board the ship. About his wife, I said: "*Kik-e-pe-kik*, 'just as you please'"; it is no affair of mine; so, taking with him Novolu Naiyup, he retraced his steps about five miles, arriving at the village at night. It had evidently by some means been arranged between him and his wife that he should return for her, and it seems that she was on the watch and all ready for flight. Unfortunately, just when he was within a few feet of her hut, a number of the village dogs began to bark, and, the men being aroused, poor Neraipau had to run for his life. Towards morning he rejoined us at Arawau, very tired, very hungry, and very, very disappointed. He never got his wife. Some years after, when she with a number of her half-heathen friends, came to one of our gatherings for the Sacrament, I made the whole people pass before me in single file in order to count them, and Neraipau and another man stood one on each side of the procession to help me. When the men had passed, the women moved slowly along, and at one of these—tall and graceful, with her head erect, and sweeping along and looking at no one—I saw poor Neraipau cast a longing glance. Another minute and she was gone; it was his wife—another man's wife now. We left Arawau about ten o'clock in the morning, and with two of the young men I reached Dillon's Bay about ten o'clock that same night. The rest of my party had succumbed, and were sleeping in the bush by a stream about ten miles away. We were all very tired and glad to be home again; that day we had travelled twenty-five miles through wild bush, crossing seven streams and climbing mountains a thousand feet in height.

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It was during the winter of this year that our good friend and helper, Watata, was married. He had served us faithfully for four years, and we had become very much attached to him. When he first came to us he could not read; for, although he had the Gospel of Luke in Aneityumese given to him by Mrs. Geddie when he was a boy, he told us that he had neglected it then, and now, having been years away from his island, working for sandal-wood traders and others, he was still unable to read and almost ashamed to try. I knew the Aneityumese language well, and took pleasure in giving Watata lessons. Soon, with my help and Abel's too (for Abel read well, and gave Watata many a spare moment of his time), and still more by his own perseverance, Watata, though far from young, learnt to read well, both in the Aneityumese and Erromangan languages. And his life was such a truly Christian one that we suggested to him that he should make the open acknowledgment of his faith, and, before long, he was admitted to the Communion of the Church. After some time he took a trip in the *Dayspring* as boat's crew, and on his return from Sydney I offered to let him give up work and go back to Aneityum. But no; Watata seemed determined to stay; he had cast in his lot with us, and told us that this was his home. It was evident that he intended to live and die on this island, and I said to Mrs. Robertson one day: "Well, if Watata has made up his mind to stay—and he seems to have done that—don't you think he would be much happier if he had a wife?" I have only twice tried my hand at match-making; Watata's case was one, the other was that of Solé and Numpunia. Both turned out well, but I never wanted to try a third time; match-making for other people is a risky business. Mrs. Robertson agreed with me, and I straightway set to work to look for a

wife for Watata. It was useless to expect to get one from Aneityum, for women were scarce there; so we had to make our own island the happy hunting ground. One day, as we were working together, I spoke to Watata about it. "*Ko; yau momu nakiugi*, 'it is quite true; I would like it,'" was his reply. Knowing the jealousy of the Erromangan men, he had always been careful to avoid rousing it in any way, but, all the same, we saw that Watata was not insensible to the fascinations of the Erromangan women. I remember one day—I don't know how it happened, the old people must have been less particular than usual—Watata, with Numpunia, Mrs. Robertson's housemaid, was making food up by the old stables; just those two; every one else seemed to be busy. Neheto, another Aneityumese man, was working with me, and, much to his chagrin, got a glimpse now and again of the pair busy over their food-preparing. The grapes were very, *very* sour, and Neheto's face was as glum as Watata's was beaming. Later on, the oven<sup>11</sup> was opened, and we saw Watata hurrying down. His face was all aglow as he came running up to Neheto. He held in his hand a steaming pudding; "*Me, Neheto! nevag virok-virok wokon nisekom*, 'here, Neheto! take a little pudding, *very* small, just all for you'." He looked happy enough to have given him all the food that day. Neheto, with a contemptuous look at the pudding lying beside him, gave a snort of disdain or anger, and, never deigning to even thank his countryman, turned to his work again. Poor Watata retired crestfallen; it was hard lines that Neheto should take it into his head to be jealous because he had been in "paradise" for an hour or two. Unfortunately, Numpunia did not seem to return his devotion. She may have thought that there was some danger of her being asked to be his wife, and one day, in my hearing, spoke rather scornfully of

the poor man. She wound up with this : " Watata is old, very, very old ". No doubt she thought that this was a decided proof of his unfitness to aspire to her youth and beauty, and thought it well to give us a hint to that effect.

Utevo was the first that I asked to take pity on Watata, but she declined, saying that her friends would be angry if she " went to Aneityum ". " Yes ; and she will marry an Erromangan, who, perhaps, some day will ill-use her and kill her," was Watata's comment on this. The next one was Ohai, Rangi's widow, but she merely twirled her toes and stared vacantly at the ceiling, never answering a word to me. It was plain that *she* did not want this man. All this was rather discouraging—two rebuffs ; but I determined to try a third time, and during a short visit to Cook's Bay wrote to Soso, who was then teaching at Arawau, asking if he would give Watata his sister Ohai, the widow of Netai Walis. He replied by letter, saying that, as far as he was concerned, it was agreed ; he was perfectly willing, but that his sister did not belong to him but to another Netai and to Noai. These were both relatives of her late husband.<sup>12</sup> It seems that Noai himself had once wanted Ohai ; he told me all about it years afterwards, when the bitterness of the disappointment was over ; it evidently had been a big disappointment at the time. He said that he and Netai Walis were great friends, almost brothers, and one day Noai opened his heart to him. "*Netai, avug*, 'Netai, my friend,' " he said ; " I want you to go and ask Soso to give me his sister, Ohai, for my wife ; this wish of mine is very great, and I could not tell any one but you. Will you do this for me, and keep it secret ? " Netai's reply was all too prompt : " I would do many things, my brother, for you, and why not this ; no one else shall know of it." He went straight away to Soso, repeated

Noai's request word for word, and added, "But who ever heard of his having a sister to give *you?*"<sup>13</sup> Give *me* your sister, Soso, and I will give you *my* sister in return." Soso closed with the offer, and Netai Walis carried off the prize—a clear case of *John speaking for himself*, and having no scruples about doing so. For many years poor Noai (and little wonder) felt very sore about the way his false friend had treated him. I suppose it was scarcely to be wondered at that, when Netai died and his widow became the property of his two relatives, Noai should have been unwilling to let her go, as they would look upon it, to another island.

Whatever was the reason, both he and Netai (who was teaching at Elizabeth Bay) would not hear of the match, and were angry with all who were in favour of it. I said to Soso, who was eager for me to *atekisah*, 'strive for it,' that we must let the matter drop, for it was not worth all this fuss and anger; and, as I had told him in my first letter, Watata would not suffer; he could do very well without a wife, and the only way we wanted him to have one was with the full consent and approval of her friends.

One day, some time after this, Noai and Netai arrived with a present of a pig and some yams, and told me that they now wanted the marriage; their *nakan*, 'anger,' had first been away down deep,<sup>14</sup> then it had been *here* (pointing to their throats), and now it had flown out altogether. I thereupon resolved that all the energy *for* the match should be on *their* side this time; so I answered very indifferently, saying that perhaps it was just as well for Ohai to *remain*<sup>15</sup> *only*; my helper, Watata, was in no hurry, and could easily do without a wife. They seemed *eager* for it then, insisted that it would please them to give this woman to Watata, and almost begged for the marriage. So I, *consenting* to

their pleading, told Watata privately of his good fortune, and the preparations for the wedding began at once. Of course, long before this, we knew that Ohai herself was willing. I remember it was on a Wednesday that it took place, and a little before the service I strolled up to Watata's and Abel's house. I found Watata quietly reading his Bible. I had a nice talk with him, speaking of how long we had been together, of the help that he had been to us, and of how God had blessed him during his years on Erromanga. He seemed very much affected, and I was deeply touched by his manly Christian words. "Misi," he said, "I am a different man from what I once was; you did not know it, but when I first came here I was bad, and sometimes when a ship was in I used to steal off to get grog. You spoke to me of my Saviour, and taught me to read His Word. I learnt to read it, and then, Misi, I learnt to *love* it. Now I feel that my heart is changed; God has been very good to me."

On the whole there was a very kindly feeling to Watata on the part of the Erromangans, and, with only one or two exceptions and those of no importance, all the villagers came to his marriage. I said that if they wanted to show that they welcomed him as one of themselves and that they were pleased with the match, they must not absent themselves from the ceremony; and they turned out heartily. A large quantity of food was cooked that afternoon in honour of the event. Watata got a fine wife in Ohai, who was a true Christian woman, and their marriage was a very happy one. He was very kind to her and to his two little step-children, and provided well for them. As an illustration of how completely our natives look upon a woman as her husband's, and at his death, his friends' property, I may add that the Erromangans, although Ohai was never off

her own island, always speak of her as "*Ohai, who went to Aneityum*". Watata's two children were, of course, named by him, and received Aneityumese names; Tawaitas, the little girl, died a few years ago, but the son, Talahapa, is a fine sturdy boy of about eighteen years, and very like his father in many ways; he has Watata's own swinging walk, and often reminds us of him.

After his marriage I said to Watata that I would not expect such constant work from him as formerly; he would still attend to the cows and bring the milk, but he was to have the rest of his time free to himself, except when I needed his help for anything special. What a comfort he was to us during all the eighteen years that he was with us! He was an excellent worker—reliable and willing, and never seemed to find his duties irksome. He was a credit to his own island of Aneityum, as well as to his adopted home, Erromanga. Although he was never a teacher, Watata was such a true, earnest Christian, that he helped the work in many ways, and I often got him to conduct service, both on Sundays and at the weekly prayer meeting. When he first came here, he seemed to find the Erromangan language hard, and spoke it with difficulty; but later on, especially after his marriage, he became very fluent, and had no more trouble with it.

We were now well off for helpers, and since 1876 we had had with us another Aneityumese man, Korkor. He had been well trained by Mrs. Inglis, who, hearing that we were very much in need of a good cook, brought him to us during the trip that she and Mr. Inglis took that year to say farewell to all their fellow-missionaries. When Korkor arrived, he at once took charge of the kitchen, and proved invaluable—another Watata. He was a genuine help and comfort to us after the rough

help that we had been putting up with for some time before. He was with us for three years, and during that time had never once to be sent to his work. Poor Woris Nemetangi, the young lad who had helped us first, had died when we were away at Tanna, in 1874. How much we felt that dear boy's death! It was Woris, who, as a mischievous lad, used to keep Mrs. Robertson busy doing his work, but, as she has often said, he more than made up for any trouble he gave her then; he was constant in his devotion to us and we fairly loved him for it. In order to be near us, in case of danger or sudden attack from the heathen, he built himself a rough booth or hut near the kitchen, and, during the winter of 1873, caught a severe cold, brought on, I am sure, by exposure to the wind and rain in that miserable shelter. It distressed us to see him suffering, but the poor boy even then would not give up his work, and struggled on; of course we did all we could for him. As the summer came on, we were delighted to observe that his health seemed to be improving, and we hoped that he would soon be quite well. But to our great grief, on our return from Tanna, we heard that he had died during our absence; the cold had never left him, and he had gradually sunk. That dear boy gave his life as truly in our service as if he had been killed by heathen for his friendship to us. We felt heart-broken on hearing of our loss.



## CHAPTER XV.

### AMOS GOES TO ENGLAND, AND DIES.—THOSE HEATHEN.

ONE of the earliest and, perhaps, the most faithful of our women-helpers on Erromanga was Ohai, one of the wives of Rangi, the Polynesian. She was the daughter of a high chief near Navwolu, a village to the north of Dillon's Bay, and had been given to Rangi as a peace-offering after one of his victorious raids upon the people of that district. She seems to have been his youngest and favourite wife; he was very kind to her, as, indeed, he was to all his wives and children. We never heard a word against him in that respect.

When her husband had to flee to Efaté (see Chapter ii.), Ohai was one of those who went with him. After his death she, with her two little children, was brought back in the *Dayspring* to Erromanga. She was then about thirty years of age, a strong, fine-looking young woman, and, as it turned out afterwards, with a large amount of energy. Of course, she was no sooner arrived than her heathen friends decided to get her to marry again. Ohai steadily refused to marry anybody, and in answer to an account of one suitor's virtues and worth—meant to soften her heart—scornfully asked, "Will he give me *cow* to eat if I marry him?" For Rangi's wives knew what it was to live well, and beef was plentiful in his camp. No; he could not give her cow to eat, and so his case was hopeless. After that, it was clearly understood that a man who could not give Ohai cow

to eat need not waste his time in a hopeless attachment. After a time, however, in spite of all her determination, she was forced to become the wife of a man who lived at Bunkil, but at her first chance she ran away from him and came to us at Dillon's Bay. Her great friend here was Utevo, a sister of another of Rangi's wives; she did all she could to help her, and the two women, with Ohai's little children, lived together. Mrs. Robertson and I told Ohai that as long as she cared to be with us, she and her children would have our warm friendship and protection. Soon she was installed as washer-woman, sharing the work with Uviyemul, another wife of Rangi. At that time all the water had to be carried in buckets to the house; so Mrs. Robertson found it better to let the women take the linens up the river to be washed. Men had to go with them to protect them. After a time, we noticed that our clothes came back with a very muddy look about them. Before long we found out that Ohai and Uviyemul were washing for all and sundry—the men's old shirts, dirty, ragged *netoitingi*, 'loin-cloths,' and whatever else was handy, being freely dumped into the tubs and washed with our clothes. We soon put a stop to that, and after the first reproof Mrs. Robertson never had any fault to find with the appearance of her linens. Ohai was head laundress for years, and after a time had also a plot of ground to sweep and keep in order. It was a lesson to see that woman going about her work. She was an early riser, and had her boiler filled and over the fire as soon as it was daylight. Most natives would then sit still or go to sleep again until the water boiled. Not so Ohai; no time was wasted, and, until the boiler was ready, she was hard at work sweeping her plot. She was so energetic and so faithful that we became very much attached to her. Her two children were con-

stantly about our place; we practically adopted both mother and children. Little Tia was six or seven years old, and her brother, Amos, a few years younger. They were both fair-skinned, pretty children, with lovely dark eyes. Mrs. Robertson thought she would give Tia a piece of work one day, just to get the child interested in doing something. She set her to dust the chairs in the sitting-room, and in a short time came back to find the little curly-headed mite, with the duster in her hand, but fast asleep, on the floor! Whenever she got tired, she would just curl herself up, no matter where she was, and go right to sleep. When she got older, Mrs. Robertson brought her into the house altogether, and took the utmost pains in training her. Tia became very handy, and picked up quickly all that there was to learn about house-work. In reading she was rather backward at first, but kept at her book steadily until she mastered it.

When Captain Caffin paid his last visit to us in the *Beagle*, in 1877, he took a great fancy to little Amos, who was then about eight years of age, and the boy seemed to be just as fond of the captain, and would slip on board the ship at every chance. He was made much of and petted by both officers and men, and, when the captain suggested taking him with him, the boy seemed crazy to go. Captain Caffin was a fine, earnest Christian, a warm friend of our Mission, and we knew he would be kindness itself to the little fellow, but at first neither Mrs. Robertson nor I approved of the suggestion. However, when the boy seemed bent on going, even hiding himself on board the ship, I asked his mother if she would be willing to part with him. Poor Ohai! she felt the prospect of separation keenly, but gave her consent, though she was really broken-hearted when

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she said good-bye. Captain Caffin's wish was to have the boy thoroughly educated in England, and, if willing, when fully trained, to send him back here as a missionary to his own island. He signed an agreement to that effect.

When we went to Sydney at the end of the year, Mrs. Robertson took with her Tia as nurse. Captain Caffin came to the house where we lodged one day and brought Amos, looking quite smart in a man-o'-war uniform. "Go over and kiss your sister, Amos," he said, and I think we were as much amused at his suggestion as he was astonished at the cool, matter-of-fact way in which brother and sister met, merely shaking hands rather indifferently.<sup>1</sup> No doubt in their own way they were very fond of each other, and delighted to meet again, but—they would not show it. We think our Erromangans are exceptionally stoical; they rarely if ever speak of their inmost thoughts, and, however much they may at times feel sorrow and trouble or the reverse, they seem to take the greatest pains to hide it. We feel this; for it seems almost impossible to get really near their hearts, and often when we want their sympathy or would like to give them ours, they just draw into their shells, and seem to be on guard against displaying any emotion. It was Yomot who said once: "We, Erromangans, cannot talk of these things. You think we are hard and have no feelings, but we have. But the thoughts stay deep *unowamam*, 'in our hearts,' and we cannot say them. We are not like other people." We know this is true, and that, perhaps, they are more sincere than if they were to talk much; but, oh! how often we have longed to hear a few words of encouragement and loving sympathy, and have been disappointed.

The first time I saw Amos after our arrival in Sydney was in the city one day. I was at the General Post

Office posting letters, when I felt some one tugging at my coat, and on looking round saw Amos with one of the sailors from the *Beagle*. The boy's eyes were literally streaming with tears, and he clung to me as if he would never let me go, saying, "*Misi, ya amagku kos kwontorileki enugkoswi Erromanga*, 'Misi, I want to go back with you to our home at Erromanga'." He was homesick enough then, poor little fellow, and would have done anything to get back. I said: "No, Amos, my boy; you must stick to your word now. You wanted to come, and, although you knew that your mother's heart was nearly breaking, you could scarcely spare time to even say good-bye to her. Captain Caffin has been too good to you for you to leave him now." He soon was quite contented again; it was just the sight of us, and the thought of his home that brought the sudden rush of feeling, and that made him, little Erromangan as he was, cry his heart out in sheer homesickness.

On their arrival in England he was placed by Captain Caffin at a good school, where he received every attention and encouragement. He got on well, and used to send us neat and carefully written letters. When we were in Scotland, in 1883, I wrote to Captain Caffin, asking his permission for Amos to leave the school and to accept the invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Barnett, our hosts, to spend a few days with us. His permission and also that of the master of the school given, Amos soon arrived in Glasgow. We had, before that, met Captain Caffin in London. I had taken a few bows and arrows home to Amos, but he asked me not to let the boy even see them, as he wanted him to forget everything about the old life on Erromanga. We, with Mr. and Mrs. Barnett, were greatly delighted with Amos; he seemed to have been splendidly trained, and, as far

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as manners went, he was a perfect little gentleman. He had forgotten his language and everything about the island, and, in deference to Captain Caffin's wishes, we did not speak much of Erromanga. Amos was then about fourteen years of age. After some time, it seemed to his friends that the lad had scarcely enough ability for constant study, and Captain Caffin, after consulting with Dr. Inglis, decided to have him trained as a printer, so that in that capacity he might be a help to us in our work. All this time, he had alone borne the expense of Amos's education. This was no small amount, and, at Dr. Inglis' suggestion, a few friends agreed together to send a yearly sum of ten pounds as a small share in the cost of his training, thinking that the least they could do was to help Captain Caffin in his generosity. Amos, or Thomas Amos, as he was called then, went to learn printing in Leominster, and seemed to be making good progress. In a short time he would have been ready to come back to us here, and to help in giving the Gospel to his own countrymen. But God took him to Himself. Poor Amos was hurt while playing football, and, after recovering from that, another accident, again at football, brought on his fatal illness, and he died in the Hereford Hospital at the age of nineteen, a sincere, earnest Christian. The following extract from the *Leominster News* was interesting to us, as we recalled to mind the subject of the touching sketch as the little Erromangan boy that we had known years before:—

“The funeral of Thomas Amos, whose death was reported in our last issue, took place on Saturday afternoon, and excited a large and sympathetic interest. Many of the tradesmen had the shutters put up, and some two hundred people were gathered round the grave and in the churchyard. . . . The service was con-

ducted by the Rev. D. A. Brown. Mr. H. S. Newman was also present, and, in the course of a brief address, referred to the last visit he had paid to the deceased in the Infirmary, describing him as one of gentle disposition, and simply trusting in the Saviour, and appealing to all present to take to heart the lesson of the sad event which had called them together and to prepare to meet God. The grave was visited on Sunday by a large number of people, and many were the signs of the kindly interest taken in the youth who had lived for some three years in the town. The Rev. D. A. Brown preached an impressive sermon to a large congregation on Sunday evening, . . . selecting for his text the words, 'Many shall come from the East and the West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven' (Matt. viii. 11). . . . Mr. Brown then very touchingly referred to his acquaintance with Thomas Amos, and gave a few incidents of the life so sadly closed in its preparation for work. . . . The lad was well educated, and his training was intended as a preparation for missionary effort. But fitted better for work than study, arrangements were made three years ago by which he entered the Orphans' Printing Press, and continued certain studies so that he might return to Erromanga as a missionary printer. He became well known in the town, and the interest awakened in many deepened with knowledge. His kindly disposition, his share in athletic sports, his consistent character, brought him into a large circle of young men, and his face and influence will be sadly missed. The story of his accident and illness was familiar, and friends and companions alike had shown their sympathy. He bore his sufferings with Christian patience, and was greatly delighted to find that he had so many friends. Mr. Brown then described a visit he had paid him in the

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Infirmity, remarking that he left the sufferer with feelings of mingled sadness and gladness ; sadness, because he saw the evidences of consumption and had no hope of his recovery ; gladness, because he found him trusting in the Saviour and quietly rejoicing in His love. Hopes had at one time been entertained that he would get better, and that there was before him a future of useful work amongst his own people, but God had called him to Himself, to a better land and to a higher service."

Tia was with us for a number of years. She was about fourteen years old when she was with us in Sydney. She was our little boy Gordon's nurse, and used to threaten very indignantly, "I'll tell Misi," if any street-child dared to tease either her charge or herself. She became a valuable help to Mrs. Robertson, and was neat and particular with her work. She was a pretty, bright girl, with a sweet expression. When she was eighteen, she was married to one of our young Christian men, Noragu, who afterwards became a teacher. They were settled at a village called Rampunumo, where they carried on a good work. Later on, they spent two years on Tongoa, assisting Mr. and Mrs. Michelsen, and, on their return to Erromanga, Noragu was appointed assistant teacher at Dillon's Bay, his wife helping him ably in her part of the work. Tia was always one of our most reliable and helpful women, and was a faithful wife to her husband and a loving mother to her three little children, who were always pictures of neatness. Her sudden death in 1892 was felt very much by us all.

After being laundress and then nurse, Ohai was our faithful cook for a long time, and, indeed, was with us until just before her death. She was really a wonderful woman, and managed to get through a surprising amount of work in one day ; she never hurried, but just kept on steadily and was never idle—a contrast to most



islanders. Ohai made few pretensions, spoke little of her religious feelings, but her life showed what she was, a true and faithful servant of Christ. It was interesting to see how much every one respected her; grown men and women all called her *namo*, 'mother'. As she grew older, she seemed to gain more influence over them all, and in her case there was no fear of jealousy as there would certainly have been with a younger woman. She was thrifty too, and, in her own way, was careful with our supplies of food, which it was her business to divide among the different workers. Of course, she had a great number of grandchildren, both real and counterfeit ones, who were always hanging round; and these, too, had to be remembered, but Ohai was too privileged a person for us to make an ado about such matters, and we always found that a little judicious blindness was a very safe thing. I honestly think that Ohai had no equal, certainly no superior, among all the Christian workers in these islands. When Tia died, Ohai went from us to care for her little grandchildren, keeping this charge faithfully until her death, which took place not long afterwards. She was not long separated from the daughter whom she had loved so devotedly, for Tia died in the latter part of 1892, and Ohai died before many months of the following year had passed.

In November, 1877, we left the islands for a visit to Sydney. While there, we had the Acts of the Apostles and also a Catechism and Hymnal printed. From contributions of fowls, curiosities, and money given by the natives and a few small sums from friends, we had about thirty-four pounds in hand towards the printing and binding of the Acts. The Foreign Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales most

generously paid for the printing of a thousand copies of the Catechism, and we returned to Erromanga the following April, well provided with the new books. We had to place our little boy, who was far from well, under medical treatment, but he did not improve much during our stay. During our absence, a severe hurricane took place in the islands, and, hearing of this, we felt that we could not postpone our return. And yet we could not take back our poor child, ill as he was. But here our warm friends Mr. and Mrs. James Anderson,<sup>2</sup> of the Royal Mint, Sydney, stepped in, offering to keep Gordon until his health should so far improve that it would be safe for him to return to us on Erromanga. And so devotedly and untiringly did they care for our poor little sufferer that, when he came to us in Mrs. Braithwaite's care about seven months later, we could scarcely believe that it was the same child. Mr. and Mrs. Anderson were always warm, loving friends to all the members of our Mission, and we, I think, have special cause to remember how much they have done for us. It was a great relief to us to be able to have Gordon with them for a time. We left Sydney on the 1st of April with our two little girls, our youngest child having been born during our stay there, and had a pleasant run to Aneityum. Mr. Michelsen, the new missionary, representing the Church of Otago and Southland, New Zealand, was a fellow-passenger. We were glad to arrive at Erromanga again and to find everything in excellent order, and the Mission cause prospering. The hurricane had not done as much damage as we expected—an agreeable surprise.

On the return trip to Sydney, the *Dayspring* was caught in a gale, when nearing the coast, and she was almost swamped. A boat, a hen-coop, a pig-sty, and fowls and pigs were washed overboard. For many

hours the little ship lay-to, and all hands were moved into the saloon, as, forward, the seas swept right over the ship and the forecastle was deluged with water. Yomot was on board as one of the crew, and was so terrified by the storm that, on reaching Sydney, he asked Captain Braithwaite if he would kindly bring his wife, Navusia, to him by the following trip of the *Dayspring*, as he was afraid to risk another such passage back to Erromanga! What about the poor wife's safety? That did not seem to strike him. However, a few weeks in Sydney gave Yomot back his courage, and he returned that same trip with our little Gordon. Mr. Anderson used to tell with much amusement of the first meeting between Yomot and Gordon. During his six months or so away from us, the child had forgotten Erromanga, and seemed frightened at black faces. When Mr. Anderson took him down to the *Dayspring*, Yomot got sight of him, and, with a rush forward, caught up Gordon in his arms and kissed him. He had the good sense to laugh when the child wiped his face to get rid of the kiss. When they were about to go ashore, Mr. Anderson took what he thought was a safe plan. "Gordon, *shake hands* with Yomot, now," doing so himself. Gordon looked doubtfully at the black hand, put his slowly into it, and then carefully wiped it all over his dress. Fearing that poor Yomot's feelings might be hurt, as soon as they got home Mr. Anderson told Gordon what a good, kind man he was, how that he was going to take care of him back to his own home, and that his face and hands were not dirty but only black. The next day Yomot called to see them. Gordon seemed anxious to atone for the mistakes of the day before, and did so by standing beside Yomot's chair most of the time, raising the big hands with his small hands, and repeating with great glee—"not dirty, only black".

In January, 1879, there came on us the alarm of an attempt at assassination. It was a trying time, but brought us very close to our own Christian people, showing us what true friends they were. It was at a feast<sup>3</sup> at Unepang that the plot was hatched. The heathen noticed with growing alarm that they were losing ground and determined to make a big stand against Christianity—a scheme to kill all the teachers being proposed. The different chiefs were to ask me for teachers (but not all at the same time lest my suspicions should be aroused), until every district had one. Then, at a given time, all were to be massacred. “But,” one of them remarked, “what is the good of that? Misi will just place out more teachers.” “Kill him, for he is the *noatnin*, ‘the root,’ of it all, and the *nesekil*, ‘snake,’ who is working against us; there have been many missionaries killed here, and, if we kill him, the white people will not dare to send another.” It was arranged that a number of them were to bring us baskets of *nuvsau*, ‘the down from the tree fern,’ for sale. We had been asking for some, and they knew we would buy. All but two were to have their baskets weighed and paid for; they had no intention of losing more money than was barely necessary for the success of their scheme. Two men were to be asked to do without their pay, for these were to be the murderers, and would be well rewarded for their unselfishness. While I was to be weighing their baskets and carefully looking at the scale of weights, they were to kill me; if one man failed the other was to do it, and the friends outside would be ready to help at a moment’s notice. When they had finished me, my wife and children were to be killed. It was cleverly and carefully planned, but a loving Father had us in His tender keeping, and allowed no evil to befall us. Unknown to our enemies, a young man about eighteen

or twenty years old, who was friendly to us, heard the whole plot being discussed, and, slipping away, he hurried to Rampuntomasi and told Noyé, our teacher there. The informer could never, of course, go back to his own land after that; so he had to seek shelter with the Mission party. Noyé at once sent two young men to let us know of our danger. They arrived during the night. In the confusion of hearing the news so suddenly, the alarm was raised that our enemies were even then coming down the valley, and, of course, all was excitement and dismay in a moment. The danger, though not so near us as we imagined, was yet real enough. Yomot came in to be with us. "They are always talking of coming; now let them come," he said. Mrs. Robertson's first thought was of our three sleeping children.

"Do you think they *could* touch them?" she asked in distress. I am afraid I could not give her much comfort; I knew what fiends these heathen could be when roused. When Yomot came in, she turned to him saying, "Oh, Yomot! do you think they would have the heart to touch our sleeping darlings?"

With one of his expressive gestures he turned to her: "Mrs. Robertson, they will have to cut this body of mine in pieces ere ever they get near them". How our hearts warmed to him, this brave and tender friend!

Word was at once sent to friendly chiefs in every direction, and, before morning, our house was surrounded by about two hundred armed men, ready to die in our defence, if necessary.

About nine o'clock that morning we saw hundreds of people coming down the track on Mount Gordon. Our foes had arrived, but we were prepared for them. They soon knew that the plot was out, and a number of them, not coming down into the valley at all, skirted the

mountain on this side of the river and then went on to Sufu, a heathen village to the north of us. The better and less cowardly ones among them came down to our houses; among them were Nariovi Nese Pau, whom Nalial, a Christian chief, had, when still a heathen and at a *nisekar* or feast, saved from being killed by putting his arms right round him, though it might have meant death to himself. Nariovi saw the place thronged with people, and, turning to Nelat, one of our young men, said: "Why are you all armed?" With a merry twinkle Nelat replied: "Oh! we are only doing this just out of amusement". Tangkau began to speak to them then, and found out that the whole thing had been plotted exactly as we had heard. Some of them had been far from wanting to take our lives, but had been compelled to join the party, and now seemed rather relieved at the turn affairs had taken. Umko, the leader of the plot, a determined old heathen, died very suddenly soon after this. He was lying down, smoking in his *siman-lo*,<sup>4</sup> and, a little after, his friends, who had called him and had got no answer, going over to the house found him dead. It was probably heart-disease, but, of course, the people—both his friends and ours—said it was a judgment on him for his sins. Certainly it had the effect of frightening all who were against us. Some of the friendly heathen, who had not known of the plot, were indignant when they heard of it, and sharply scolded the others for their treacherous conduct. Naling, the chief, and Tangkau wanted us to block all the roads to the south, and to forbid the people in those districts to visit us. We told them that that would never do. I was the missionary of the southern people as well as theirs, and we must just keep on doing our duty and trust in God to care for us.

A large meeting was held the day after the alarm,

and several rules drawn up: (1st) It was agreed to have a barter day—Wednesday—and on no other day to give out or buy anything. We soon changed the day to Thursday, as Wednesday was fully taken up with the prayer-meeting and other classes. On the barter day, the Dillon's Bay people were to stay near us.—(2nd) Nobody was to come into our premises unless clothed in some way, and a teacher or some reliable man must always come with strangers.—(3rd) No weapon of any kind would be allowed inside the mission grounds. The people all approved of this, and saw to it that the rules were kept. The young men resolved to keep guard round our house every night, and from twelve to sixteen of them undertook this work. I told them they must take it in watches, but they insisted that they could very well do without sleep, and would not hear of such a thing. I thought the best plan was to let them try. They kept up well for several nights, taking snatches of sleep in turns, and in no order at all. They always had a cup of hot tea and biscuits before going on guard. One night I slipped out to the verandah where they were, and found every man sound asleep! I took every gun away, and piled them up inside the house, then roused the guard. Their dismay and shame at having been disarmed while sleeping were amusing to see; but that served my purpose. The poor fellows were thoroughly worn out and simply could not keep awake, and were now only too ready to take proper watches of from three to four hours each. This was not kept up long. We never liked the idea of our house having to be guarded, and, as soon as possible, we persuaded the young men to give it up. The heathen seemed thoroughly ashamed of their conduct; and on the other hand the alarm seemed to have had the effect of stirring up our own people to greater energy, both in caring for us and for the work of Christ on Erromanga.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE MARTYRS' MEMORIAL CHURCH.

IN the month of June, 1879, the Synod of the New Hebrides Mission was held at our station, Dillon's Bay, Erromanga. There were present Messrs. Paton, Copeland, Mackenzie, Macdonald, Annand, Michelsen, Lawrie and myself. Mr. Annand was Moderator. The only ladies present, besides Mrs. Robertson, were Mrs. Paton and Mrs. Macdonald. Captain Braithwaite, of the *Day-spring*, was on shore every day, going many miles inland in search of plants. Auwang usually went with him, and, whenever the roads made it possible, our old horse, "Bessie," was taken for the captain's use. The business meetings were held in the old grass church, and the committee meetings, usually during the evenings, in our own house. It was very pleasant to my wife and myself to have the Synod at our place, and we had a delightful stretch of ten days of Christian fellowship with our friends. One Sunday, we joined together in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and on one week evening our Bible Society meeting was held. During Synod some excellent resolutions were passed, one of which was that natives desirous of joining the membership of the church must attend a special class for their instruction for at least a year. Native people cannot be too thoroughly trained to understand the Word of God clearly, and to realise what is implied in becoming a Christian. Many natives take to the profession of



Christianity with very little consideration apparently, and we find that some of them, after they have joined the church, live very much like the masses around them. They abstain from evil, it is true, but they do little or no good. These are lukewarm Christians, and are very different from many of our people who have really given themselves to Christ and have His Holy Spirit in their hearts. The missionaries are getting more and more particular about whom they admit into church fellowship, and feel that in this matter especially, quality is of far greater importance than quantity. At this Synod Mr. Michelsen was appointed to Tongoa, and Mr. Macdonald and myself were to assist in his settlement. We had no Synod meetings in the afternoons, taking that part of the day for long walks through the valley, and sometimes up on to the table-land. The boat was always ready for any one wanting to go off to the *Dayspring*, or for those who could enjoy a row in the bay or up the river.

There were several children of the missionaries also with us, and these, with our own three, kept the house lively. Nearly every afternoon they all had rides on old "Bessie"; they looked upon these as very special treats. One lady of the party also mounted, and, being an expert rider, quite astonished every one by the strange antics her prehistoric charger was seen to indulge in. Soon we ceased to wonder at these sudden and unexpected movements of horsemanship before us, they were so many and so various, when a native, who up to that moment had been swinging round close to the horse's head, bounded like a flash past the horse's tail, and then fell in a heap near the trembling spectators thirteen yards off. The horse also wheeled round, bolted under a high cross-bar and disappeared. The lady had sat in the saddle through all this as calmly

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and with as much dignity and grace as if she had been holding a reception. But at the very instant that the horse shot *under* the bar, she shot up into the air, with apparently not the slightest effort, seemed to remain suspended for a moment and then floated down to the earth like a soft shadow, smiling as if nothing unusual had occurred. If indeed she thought it worth mentioning at all, in writing her journal that evening, she may have added, "Had a delightful ride this afternoon ; mounted a lovely, quiet horse, *quite young* and *so* well trained ; must get my husband to procure, if possible, one just like this."

Day after day the chief, teachers and people brought up presents of food, and, long before the missionaries had arrived, we had arranged the plan of work. Our people helped us admirably, each one knowing exactly his or her duty, and doing it with a hearty good-will. We never felt the care or burden of the work, for all—both visitors and helpers—were kind and considerate.

The visit of so many missionaries for nearly two weeks, and the presence of the little mission vessel with her good captain and crew in our bay, had a very good effect on our people. The Mission cause on Erromanga seemed thenceforth to take a forward movement, and our work was blessed more and more every year.

The settlement of Mr. Michelsen, later in the year, was a very interesting one. There was not one Christian on Tongoa when he began his work there in 1879. And now, not only have all the natives of that island become Christian, but also all the people of Tongariki and the other islands of the Shepherd group, and also a goodly number on the south coast of Epi, all of whom have been gathered in through the efforts of Mr. Michelsen and his teachers.

The arrival of our new church from Sydney in September of this year was an important event to us at

Dillon's Bay, and, indeed, all over the island. This was the outcome of my suggestion to Dr. Steel,<sup>1</sup> when he was in the islands five years before; the church was to be a memorial to the martyrs of Erromanga. The Rev. W. Wyatt Gill<sup>2</sup> (afterwards Rev. Dr. Gill), of the London Missionary Society, had in 1862 collected a small sum to erect a monument to the memory of Williams and Harris. On account of the troubled state of the island, this was, at that time, impossible, and the money was put in a Bank. Dr. Steel had taken up warmly the idea of a church as a memorial for all the martyrs, and during 1878, with the consent of Mr. Gill and others, the sum of money collected so many years before—now grown to forty-six pounds—was added to the other contributions. Through the efforts of Dr. Steel a sum of, in all, two hundred pounds was collected; this, with the exception of the forty-six pounds, was given principally by friends in New South Wales. Dr. Steel suggested that we should try to have the church completed by November, 1879—forty years from the date of the martyrdom of Williams and Harris. Much as I should have liked it, this was impossible in so short a time.

The church was 40 ft. by 20 ft., and the frame was of Australian blue gum, to be weather-boarded<sup>3</sup> on the outside and the inner walls to be plastered. The roof was of corrugated iron; windows and all fittings complete. We began the work of erection as soon as possible, and had it well in hand before the end of the year; the foundation stone was laid by Usuo, the second son of Auwi-auwi, the murderer of John Williams. For many years Usuo had held out against the Gospel, and, though he often talked of "taking the *nam*," 'the word,' that is, the Gospel Christianity, seemed hardened in heathenism. A short time before this, he and his brother, Tangkau, with Naliniwé, the chief of Soki and

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others, had attended a heathen feast at Unepang. The usual sham fight <sup>4</sup> had turned into a real one before any one realised it; for there had at one time been bitter enmity between some of those present, and though it seemed to have died away it had now burst out afresh. The Unepang people turned on the Northerners, and blood was shed freely. Usuo was gashed on his face and head, and both Tangkau and Naliniwé got bad arrow wounds. One man ran to where the women were sitting, and, as he thought, perhaps, into safety, but was followed and literally hacked to pieces. Of course those who could do so fled. It was a narrow escape for the Dillon's Bay and Soki chiefs, and, the first time I saw Usuo after his return, he looked a sorry picture. He came down to see me one day, and I spoke seriously with him. I asked him if he did not think he had served the devil long enough; he had given his youth and his manhood to him, and what had he gained; now, he had nearly lost his life and had been badly wounded at one of the devil's feasts. I said: "Give it up, Usuo, my friend, and take Jesus for your Master now; you have turned from Him all these years, but you can come now." He seemed touched by this, saying that he wanted to become a Christian, and from this time he would try to give up all his bad ways. He kept his word manfully, and, though his elder brother clung to heathenism for many a long day, Usuo came out and joined us. And as he had been taught to read by Mrs. Gordon, when a heathen boy, about twenty years before, he had this advantage that he could already read God's Word, and had not to begin at the very letters of the alphabet as so many men and women of his age have to do.

Mrs. Gordon's labour of love in teaching this young heathen boy is a touching lesson for us. For years, the effect of it seemed lost, and it was, no doubt, a

grief to her to see him still living in heathenism and thinking so little of the "word" he had learned to read. But the seed had not been sown in vain; and, but for his early training with Mrs. Gordon, Usuo might never have become the helpful, true and earnest Christian that he was. He has been a sincere friend to the Mission cause ever since he joined us in 1879, and has shown by his consistent life that he has really given his heart to the Saviour. Naling, the chief of Dillon's Bay, died in Sydney in 1879; then Usuo took his place, and, besides being chief, he has been a teacher for many years, and then an elder of our church on Erromanga.

We kept hard at work all the summer on the new building, and, with the exception of the plastering, it was finished before May, 1880. However, we put off the opening for another month, hoping that by doing so we might have some of our fellow-missionaries with us. Early in June the people from far and near began to gather in. Unfortunately, the *Dayspring* did not arrive in time to let our friends be with us, and we thought it better not to keep the people from distant villages waiting too long. The opening service in "The Martyrs' Memorial Church" was deeply interesting. It was touching to hear Usuo, for the first time in his life in public, leading us in prayer. Others who, besides myself, took part in the service were Yomot, Atnelo, Netevisuo and Nauvi. Yomot's address was specially good; he contrasted that day, when we were worshipping without fear or danger in our beautiful new church, with the early struggles of Joe and Mana and of the Gordons and Macnairs. I was struck with one remark of his. "Before long," he said, "before this generation has passed away, some here will *tavriuri*, that is, forget or be in ignorance of, the very *netevaru*, 'doings,' of heathenism." This has proved a true prophecy. Atnelo, too, spoke simply but earnestly, telling how, as a

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boy, he used to be tied and beaten for coming to Mr. Gordon's classes. It was a thanksgiving service for our many mercies, not the least of these being the gift of a house in which to worship our God, and the occasion was one to be long remembered by us all.

The Martyrs' <sup>5</sup> Memorial Church is <sup>6</sup> a very pretty building and very suitable to our climate. It is strong and substantial, stands in a good position a little to one side of the Mission house but on somewhat higher ground. It is said to seat two hundred people, but we find with even one hundred and fifty it is uncomfortably full. The tablet to the memory of the martyrs, which had been sent to Erromanga by Sydney friends some years before, was now placed in the new building. The inscription is in the native language, and the English translation of it is:—

Sacred to the Memory  
of the Missionaries who died on this Island

JOHN WILLIAMS

JAMES HARRIS

Killed at Umbongkora (Dillon's Bay) by the Natives  
November 30th, 1839.

GEORGE N. GORDON

ELLEN C. GORDON

Killed by the People of Unepang  
May 20th, 1861.

JAMES MACNAIR

Who died at Umbongkora (Dillon's Bay)  
July 16th, 1870.

JAMES D. GORDON

Killed at Potnuma (Portinia Bay)  
March 7th, 1872.

"They hazarded their lives for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts xv. 26).

"It is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. i. 15).

Another tablet, with an inscription both in Erromangan and English reads as follows:—

“This building, to the memory of the missionaries who were martyrs for Christ on Erromanga, was erected chiefly at the expense of friends of the Mission in New South Wales, in 1879.”

When the church was opened, it was announced that all who wished to attend services must come well clad—the men in shirts and trousers, and the women and girls in light print dresses; boys were to be allowed to come wearing only the *netoitingi*, that is, the ‘lava-lava’ or loin-cloth. We said we would help them in this as much as possible; the matter of dress was then taken up enthusiastically. During the next week Mrs. Robertson and her women were up to their eyes in work, cutting out and fitting garments for all and sundry. It was surprising to see how well the people managed to prepare in that short time; for, besides our own church-goers, who, as a rule, were well off in the matter of clothes, there were numbers of friendly heathen and new-comers who had to be provided for. The costumes the first Sunday were, to say the least, startling. Every man had on some kind of a coat or shirt, and trousers of all colours, shapes and sizes were not forgotten. One woman from Sufu, who, it seems, had not been able to obtain a dress in the time, ventured to the church door, but “bolted” after one look at the gorgeously attired congregation. Mrs. Robertson heard of it, and somehow or other succeeded in finding a dress for the lady. Naliniwé, Tangkau, Umas and others were, unfortunately, shocked at the appearance of their wives; the creatures looked far too slim, they said, and could not be allowed to appear in Society with so little on them. Yomot and Atnelo came in perplexity to me about it: “What do you think, Misi? Perhaps they had

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better put on a few of their own skirts". Mrs Robertson came to our help, explaining that she had never intended the women to leave off all their native skirts, but only a few of them, so that they might appear less like balloons than usual; so that the rest of us might have room to turn round in the church. The aggrieved husbands, after a little, seemed to understand matters better and took the affair more calmly. They were told, too, that we did not insist on their wives forsaking their skirts for European clothes, just as we did not insist on their coming to the church. But, as they wanted to come to the services, we felt sure that they would respect our wishes and those of our Christian people, and come into God's House in the very best attire that they could get. After that there was no more trouble.

The new church was a great comfort to us and our people. We could then reserve our schoolroom for classes only, and now, more than in the earlier years, all our classes were very well attended. Besides the early morning school, Mrs. Robertson still had her class of young people and children from about ten till twelve o'clock, while for an hour every evening the young men came to me for reading, etc. We always set their copy books the night before, in order that they could be used by daylight and corrected the following evening. Commonly natives are poor writers; they do not take enough pains at the outset, and are in too great a hurry to distinguish themselves by sending away documents to friends before they can form a single letter properly. And when they do get to that habit their case is hopeless. However, in those who do take pains we are well repaid for our teaching. Some of our people write good, clear hands; Yomot's letters were always neat and easily read. Ugkerilo, one of my teachers, writes the prettiest, clearest hand of any native I know, and it is a pleasing



contrast to the handwriting of some white people. He is rather a delicate man, cannot go about much, and so is a great correspondent. I have notes regularly from him, though he lives only a few miles south of us. His missives are easily read, but one never knows what request he is going to make. He is a really good man and an excellent teacher, but is also a bit of a bore sometimes. Lately, when he was staying at Dillon's Bay for a short time on account of his illness, he practised writing all the time. One day he was to write me a letter on any subject he liked. "What *could* he write about?" he said. "Anything; it does not matter what, if the letter is neatly written and well punctuated." It came to me that evening—a long, carefully worded account of our Erromangan Mission, with the writer's thoughts and criticisms on it, and an earnest exhortation to us all to strive on in this great work. It was a very good letter—quite a sermon in itself; but then there was a postscript, "Misi, do you think you could spare me a little rice for my soup to-morrow?" He is great on dates, and is most particular to mention the day, month, and even year on which any incident that he considers important took place.

One fortunate thing is that those who are in our classes—both men and women—seem really fond of writing, and some, as I have said, do take the utmost pains to improve. We had a fine number of young people about us at the time of which I am speaking, and it was a pleasure to teach them. The class for candidates was held then, as now, once a week, and on the same day as the prayer meeting. Atnelo, who was then teacher, was very helpful, and took his full share of the work. I still kept up my plan of visiting other villages every second Sunday, spending the whole day away from the mission station, and Atnelo took turn

about with me in this. He was one of the most gentle of men, and in some ways, though both were excellent teachers, a decided contrast to our good Yomot, whose brusque manner sometimes told against him. Yomot almost *compelled* the people to come in; Atnelo *drew* them. They were afraid to disobey Yomot, but could not help obeying Atnelo. Both were noble men, and each did his work of evangelisation as he only could do it. Atnelo had been baptised by Mr. James Gordon; his surname was Mackie—Atnelo Mackie, after the late Rev. George Mackie, of South Yarra, Melbourne, a very great friend of our Mission and of Mr. Gordon in particular.

One of the first ceremonies arranged to take place in the new church was Ativi's wedding—a wedding which never came off! Ativi was a short, squat man, belonging to a village to the south of Dillon's Bay. He was not much of a favourite with anybody, and, to this day, is perhaps the most disagreeable man on the whole island; he always seems to have some grievance, and usually is hard to manage. The wife who was picked out for him was one of Mrs. Robertson's best helpers, a very nice-looking girl, with a bright, sweet face, very capable and well-liked by every one. Mrs. Robertson used to say that Navusia was the only girl she had who could do rough, dirty work and yet keep clean herself. Ativi had already bought another girl for a wife, and he was told that he could only have Navusia (should she herself be willing) by giving up all claim to Nanepen, who, as she was still a child, was living with her own people. The man was not for doing this at first, and, with the help of his friends, tried to steal Navusia away. We heard of the plot through Atnelo, to whose house the girl had fled, and we took

good care that she should sleep on the Mission premises after that. The matter seemed to drop for a little, and then, Ativi behaving himself better, it was brought up again. The Rampuntomasi people, Yomot included, wanted the match; the Dillon's Bay people were against it. Naiwan, the young chief of Dillon's Bay, had been suggested as a suitable husband for Navusia, and she rather favoured the idea, not that she cared for Naiwan, but he was decidedly an improvement on Ativi, whom she evidently disliked. "Of two evils," she wisely decided to "choose the less." Mrs. Robertson and I spoke to her by herself, and she told us very plainly that she did not want Ativi. What was our surprise to hear in a little that, on being questioned by her friends, she had said that she was quite willing, but that Misi did not want her to marry that man, and she could not disobey him! Of course, the girl said that to protect herself. I said: "Very well; you will soon see that Misi is not stopping the match; *now that Navusia is willing*, they will be married this afternoon".

Mrs. Robertson gave the girl a pretty new dress, and sent her away to get ready for the ceremony. I sent for Ativi, and, in the presence of Yomot and Atnelo, who represented the two contending parties, got him to give up all claim to little Nanepen. He was so delighted at the prospect of getting Navusia that he would have promised anything.

Ativi's wedding day was rather an unfortunate one for another person, old Novwai Simon, who had been a "sorcerer," and had lately joined the Christian party. It was time for the service, and no one was near to ring the bell; just then old Simon appeared.

I said to him, "Simon, do you think you could ring the bell?" "*Kai*, 'I don't know,' Misi, but I can at least try;" and so straightway he set to work. I had scarcely left

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him when, it seems, my son Gordon, a child then about four or five years old, appeared on the scene, and rated Simon soundly in Erromangan for not ringing the bell properly. "Give it a good hard pull as the other men do," he said. Poor old Simon, who would never dream of questioning Gordon's wisdom, determined to do his best. Unfortunately, he had lost an eye, and did not see that the framework or rough box which covered the bell was shaky. He stood right under it, and obeying orders, gave one long, hard pull, and the next thing he knew was that he was lying on his back, the box beside him, and Gordon nowhere to be seen. The poor fellow was badly cut about the face, especially the nose, where the box had grazed him after striking on one of the wooden supports. Gordon fled to tell me of the disaster, but poor old Simon seemed rather to doubt his innocence in the matter. I went over to him at once, sending for Atnelo to ring the bell, and doctored the bruises as well as I could. The accident might have been far more serious; it was bad enough, but the whole affair was very ludicrous, and it was as much as I could do to keep a sober face, while I could see Atnelo, with his face discreetly turned away from us, trying to ring the bell and shaking with laughter at the same time.

Soon we were all in the church. I had bidden everybody be present, especially those who had been against the match, and so the building was well filled. Mrs. Robertson had headache and fever, and could not come over. Ativi stalked in after a little, dressed in a long white, flowing nightshirt—nothing else! It had evidently belonged to a much taller man, for he was "floating" in it. It was the most curious get-up for a bridegroom that I have ever seen. The service began, but after a little, when I looked round I could see no sign of the bride. I slipped over and said to old Navusia: "Where

is your namesake?" "Kai, 'I don't know,'" she said. There seemed trouble ahead; so calling on a long-winded man to engage in prayer, I went over to our house, and asked Mrs. Robertson where the girl was. "I thought she was in the church; I sent her some time ago," she said. I found Navusia at last, sitting in our wash-house, in her everyday garments—grass skirts and a print jacket—and hacking away at the seat she was on with a big butcher's knife. She said she would "never marry that man".

I went back to the church then, and sent to her Yomot and Atnelo that they might hear her words themselves. They misunderstood me, and stupidly brought her with them to the church, thinking I was going to question her there. Mrs. Robertson had been lying down, but now caught sight of them going across, Yomot and Atnelo leading, and Navusia following very unwillingly, and she at once concluded that the girl was being taken over to be married. She rushed to the church, and put her head in at the window. I never saw my wife look more indignant: "If you and these teachers force this poor girl to marry against her wishes, you will surely suffer for it". "My dear, we are not thinking of such a thing," I said; "the men have made a mistake; I did not mean the girl to come over at all." Navusia was still standing outside, and I sent out to question her. In a little Yomot came in. "Well, Yomot?" I said. "She says she *loathes* the man, and will never marry him."

It was an honest report of Yomot's, for he had wanted the match. I turned round on the people then, telling them they could see now whether Misi was stopping the match or not. I did not blame Ativi as much as those of his friends who had tried to hurry on and force the match. All this time, the poor man had been sitting

looking the picture of woe. He must have felt acutely when he heard Yomot giving his report. The service closed abruptly, and, just as I was going out, I happened to look back, and saw Naiwan, the young chief of Dillon's Bay and Ativi's rival, shaking hands with and congratulating him heartily. One or two more followed, and a whole string of young fellows expecting some fun were waiting their turn, while poor Ativi stood perspiring under all this ridicule. I put a stop to all that quickly, for I was very sorry for him, and it was unkind of the young men to add to his misery. I told him to come and see me that evening, as I wanted to have a talk with him. When he came, I told him that, though we had disapproved of the match all along, Mrs. Robertson and I felt much sympathy for him. He could see now how it would have been ; they could never have been happy. His best plan now was to look for a wife, who would not want to run away from him, and who would be more suitable than Navusia.

But the man was angry, and told me that he was going south to get the Unepang people to help him, and that then they would come back and burn our house to the ground. That was enough for me. I said : "I was sorry for you, Ativi, and was willing to help you, but after this I am different. How dare you speak to me like this? If you don't get out of that door and down those steps as quickly as you ever did in your life, I will help you out." He took the hint and made off in haste, and that same night he struck out across the river, vowing vengeance on all at Dillon's Bay. One of our missionaries wrote home that he "tucked his nightshirt under his arm, and, without ever looking back, swam to the other side of the river". I can't be quite sure of the correctness of this statement; but

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whatever Ativi did with his wonderful wedding garment that was the last time that we ever saw it.

To make the story end properly, I ought to be able to say that Navusia married Naiwan, but this did not happen. She became the wife of Novolu Naiyup, a young teacher, and for many years they were among our best helpers in the Mission. They were for some time with Mr. and Mrs. Michelsen on Tongoa, and there, too, Navusia endeared herself to all by her sweet and gentle Christian influence.

I have, in a previous chapter, told of Watata's marriage. The only other match that I contrived to make was that of Numpunia and Solé. Numpunia had been with Mrs. Robertson ever since we landed on Erromanga, and had given us much satisfaction and help. She and Nuferuvi, Molep's wife, had both been converted under Mr. Gordon's teaching. Numpunia had for a time been with Mrs. Macnair, who, however, could make nothing of her, finding her unreliable and flighty. But she grew steadier as she grew older. Utevo again had been Mrs. Macnair's best help, but we found her very hard to manage. Numpunia had many peculiar ways; she had not Navusia's gentleness of manner nor sweet disposition, but withal was a good, honest, painstaking girl, and one who was always eager to atone for a fault. Mrs. Robertson was very fond of her. Soon after our arrival on Erromanga Numpunia was baptised, and a Christian name was added from Mrs. Milne, of Nguna, who had once spent a short time with Mrs. Macnair at Dillon's Bay, and whom Navusia greatly admired. By the first trip of the *Dayspring* to the north, unknown to us, the lady wrote to Mrs. Milne, telling her that she had received her name, and suggesting that Mrs. Milne (in consideration of the honour

shown her, I suppose) should send by return of the vessel *a dress and one or two handkerchiefs*. Mrs. Milne was amused at the girl's "cheek," but did not fail to send the required goods.

Numpunia had a mind of her own, and had already given a decided "no" to two or three suitors. It was she who had made the scornful remarks about Watata's age, fearing that we might want her to take pity on him. We had, living near us at this time, a nice young man named Solé, who was being trained as a teacher, and it seemed to me that we could not do better than bring about a match between the two. Since that time I have "had my eye teeth cut," and know better than to interfere in marriage arrangements. Solé was helping me to lay the floor of our verandah, when I suggested my plan to him. He seemed rather pleased with it, saying that it was *aremai*, 'good'. I said that if Numpunia were willing to have him, he must not be afraid of the talk of her friends; he must *atekisah*. "*Ko, ya anaiekishah*, 'I will strive for it,'" he replied. Fortunately for us Numpunia *was* willing, and, when I spoke about it to Noyé, her step-father and one of my earliest and best teachers, he seemed delighted, and made no objection whatever.

Everything seemed to be going on propitiously until the very last, when some of the Dillon's Bay people, Usuo and Tangkau especially, made all kinds of objections, and used what the natives called "*hard talk*" to Noyé. Noyé was indignant, and said to Usuo: "You have my sister" (he called Usuo's wife his sister); "you are not going to get my daughter, too." We thought it best that the ceremony should not take place in the church but in our own house, and with none present except those who were willing that the marriage should go on. Numpunia and Solé seemed to feel that



it was a big honour, and quite a crowd gathered in our sitting-room for the occasion. Mrs. Robertson dressed Numpunia herself, and the girl looked really pretty in her simple attire. The usual way is for the girl to be tied up in a number of shawls with one or two dresses under them, and the head almost covered by a big handkerchief. With the exception of those who have lived near the Mission station and know better, most of our women, however well they may dress ordinarily, contrive to look their worst on their wedding-day. Just before the service began, and much to our surprise, Tangkau appeared at the door, and begged to be allowed in. He said he had not come to make trouble; he only wanted to see the marriage, and, as he seemed so eager, we allowed him to come in. The old man came on tip-toe into the room, sat down beside the others, and never stirred till the whole thing was over, going away then as quietly as he had come. The semi-private ceremony had evidently made a sensation.

Soon after the marriage the *Dayspring* arrived. Mr. and Mrs. Macdonald were in need of domestic help, so we arranged that Solé and Numpunia should go to them. Nelat came down to tell us that some of the people were determined to prevent them going. There was great excitement, but Solé and his wife went on quietly getting ready, and we were soon down at the boat. There was a big crowd on the shore, and some angry faces in it, but no one dared to make trouble then; the whole thing ended in talk. Just as the boat was leaving the shore one old mischief-maker rose and waved his hand derisively to the girl, saying, "*Kik-e-pau, nasiven*," meaning, 'my love to you, woman,' or, 'good-bye, you woman,' which, in Erromangan, is a most offensive salutation. After they were some time at Havannah Harbour, Mr. Macdonald's station on Efaté,

the couple returned and were placed out as teachers at Cook's Bay, where they did excellent work until poor Solé's death.

Shortly before we left for Canada I married Numpunia again—this time to Nelat. Atnele had then become a widower, and, hearing that Numpunia had been an old "flame" of his, I gave him the first choice, but he politely declined the honour. "To marry her would be *nemàs*, 'death,' Misi; for she has two children and I should have to look after them as well as her." After Nelat and Numpunia had been some time teaching at Elizabeth Bay, they agreed, on our return from Canada, to go and help Mr. and Mrs. Charles Murray on Ambrim. Mr. Murray had spoken to me about it at the Synod, and, as soon as the *Dayspring* brought us to Erromanga, I sent for Nelat and his wife. It was cheering to see their willingness for this; we had no trouble at all. Their boxes were soon in the boat, and that same evening they were away in the *Dayspring*. Mr. Murray was very glad to get them, and soon settled them out at a village some distance from his station.

When I went north in the *Cairndhu*, in 1887, I saw them both. Captain Eyre very kindly sent his boat for them, which saved them a long walk. They seemed delighted with their work, and pleased to tell me about it. Mr. Murray was leaving Ambrim at the time, and they, especially Nelat, were very much grieved to say good-bye to him. They still stayed on at Ambrim, the Mission station being left under the care of one of Mr. Mackenzie's teachers, Kalsong, and his wife, who are now with Mr. Watt on Tanna. One day, some time after this, when Nelat was away at his plantation, an old heathen woman came and asked Numpunia to

go and eat some food with her. Numpunia thanked her, but said that she could not go, as she had her children to look after. The old woman replied that she would send the food to her. When it came, poor Numpunia ate a little of it, and very soon after died in great agony; the food had been poisoned. Neither Nelat nor any one else could ever find out the cause for this; for Numpunia seemed to have no enemies, and could have had no suspicion at all when she accepted the old woman's gift. Her death was a great shock to us and to all her friends.

After the manner of the old minister who had been a lifetime in one charge, I can tell that I baptised Numpunia; married her; baptised her child, Wamlai; married Wamlai; and, on 30th April, 1899, I baptised Wamlai's child.

During the summer of 1879-1880, I was busy building a house at Port Nariven or Potnariven. After the Cook's Bay house was destroyed, we arranged to make Port Nariven our head station on the east side of the island, for it was more central and in every way better suited for what was needed. The "Kirk" of the Lower Provinces of Canada had sent us twenty-five pounds to be used in whatever way we deemed best, and we thought we could not do better than put it to the new house. Our generous Watata gave five pounds, nearly all his savings. The house cost sixty-four pounds, and consisted of two rooms, twenty feet by thirty feet, and a verandah; it was weather-boarded and had a thatched roof. A few years ago, we took away the thatch and put on corrugated iron. We spend a few months yearly at our east station, and the house has been very useful to us.

While I was framing it, we stayed for some time at

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Port Nariven, but our only dwelling had been a small grass hut, and it was not too comfortable. It was very damp ; so I laid a rough floor in one room.

One Sunday night, we caught sight of a rat upon one of the rafters of the house ; its sides were panting, and it was crouching as if terror-struck. It was not long before we saw the cause—a great snake, over four feet in length, stretched out a few feet from it. It was far from a pleasant sight, and I hurried out to get some one to come and shoot it. The men said that that would not do ; that it would be better to catch it and bring it down. Among natives, there are those who can touch a snake without the least fear, and others again who will never go near one, if they can help. That night, unfortunately, there seemed to be no “snake man” handy, but, after a little, a man called Lifu Torileki gained courage and said he would catch it, if I would give him something to put on his hands. I gave him a pair of socks to do duty as gloves, and very soon he had climbed the big centre-pole of the house, and managed to grab the snake at the back of its neck. Needless to say, the rat decamped. I wanted to preserve the snake, but Mrs. Robertson begged to have it taken right away ; so I told the men to kill it. They said they would, but would like to have a talk with it first. So, tying a rope round its neck and making sure that it would not escape them, they set to work to reprove it for its bad conduct. “What do you mean, you *nareki sat*, ‘sinner,’ by going into Misi’s house without asking any one’s leave, and at this hour of the night?” There was an old heathen standing near. “Yes, and on the Sabbath Day, too,” he said, with a grin.

Mrs. Robertson felt that she could not stay any longer

in that house ; this incident had given her too much of a fright ; so I took her and the children back to Dillon's Bay. We started at two o'clock on Tuesday morning, and went up the mountain to Arawau by torchlight. By eight o'clock we had crossed the third stream and were right out of the forest and on the clear table-land of West Erromanga. We sat down and had breakfast and a good rest, which Mrs. Robertson especially sorely needed. Her skirts were draggled and damp with the long walk, and there was still a long journey ahead of us. I was glad, for her sake, when we reached Dillon's Bay, and were in our own comfortable house again. I stayed one day there, and then went back to Port Nariven.

After putting up the framework of the house, I left for home again while the men were thatching the roof. They let me know of it as soon as that work was finished, when I went and did the weather-boarding. The house was beautifully thatched ; everyone had taken the utmost pains with the work. The men plastered the inside of the rooms. Yomot laid all the floor himself, and laid it well. The entire framing was done with the help of two of my young teachers—Uturu and Lifu Ukina—both bright and capable fellows. Ukina had been in the *Dayspring* with Captain Braithwaite, who was very fond of him, and used to say that he was "the smartest man, white or black," that he had ever had in his ship.

It was towards the close of 1880 that we lost Soso, the warm friend of the Mission. He had been Dr. Gordon's *pundit*,<sup>7</sup> and wrote the letter to Mr. Paton telling of the missionary's tragic death. When we settled on Erromanga in 1872, he was in charge of the station at Dillon's Bay. Soon after this, we placed

him at Cook's Bay, then at Arawau, and finally at Port Nariven. He did good work wherever he was. He was a sincere follower of Christ, and an able and faithful teacher, with (for a native) a wonderful knowledge of the Bible. He had for years been troubled with elephantiasis in one leg, and the disease gradually worked through his whole system. He became very weak, and for some time before his death could do no active work. I was not surprised when the message came from him saying that he would like to see me once more before the end. I left Dillon's Bay almost at once, arriving at Port Nariven late in the afternoon. Netai was with Soso, and doing all that he could to lessen his sufferings. The dying man was quite conscious, and seemed so pleased to see me. I was very much touched when I heard how he had been longing and praying that he might be spared till after my arrival. The next morning I went to see him again. We had a long and delightful talk; dear Soso telling me, as he had always loved to do, of Mr. Gordon's work and of all he had done for him. He knew his end was near, and was not only resigned but joyous at the thought of so soon meeting his Saviour. When I said good-bye to him (I had to return very soon to Dillon's Bay), I asked if there was anything that he would like me to do for him before I left. He answered me so brightly, saying that he needed nothing; he had just wanted to grasp my hand once more and to tell me that he was resting and trusting in Jesus. Soso "knew in whom he had believed," and was just waiting in his simple childlike faith for the call to go home. A few days after my return to Dillon's Bay the news of his death came.

In March of the following year, the Sacrament of the

Lord's Supper was dispensed at Cook's Bay. Besides the Christian party—church members and adherents—there were present many of the heathen and semi-heathen, in all eight hundred and fifty people. Crowds came pouring in every day, and before long it was easy to see that there was a great deal of excitement among them all. Several women, among them Tahamen, the widow of one of my teachers, were to be baptised, and their heathen friends were determined to prevent it. We expected that there would be trouble over this, but had no idea how angry the heathen were. On the very morning of the Communion service, Atnelo came to me, and told me that there was a deep plot among the men of Nugkon-nu to seize the women if we should attempt to baptise them, and to pay us out for daring to interfere with their wishes. They were determined at any cost to stop the baptism. Atnelo asked me what we should do. "We will go on with the service," I said; "and I will speak to the heathen before any one is baptised." I felt that they had really no claim to any of the women, especially to Tahamen, whose husband had been a teacher for many years, and who was herself a sincere Christian.

Atnelo and I had just finished talking of the trouble when my door opened and in stalked Uluhoi, an old heathen, though friendly to us. He had nothing on but a black-lustre skirt, trimmed with a number of frills. He had evidently come to see me on some matter of importance, and looked as solemn as a judge. I burst out laughing at the ridiculous figure he cut, and, before there was time to make any apology, Uluhoi had drawn his skirt around him and stalked out again in high dudgeon. However, we soon made matters right, and Uluhoi and I were as good friends as ever. This same man, some years before, had in kindness brought hot

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*taro* to us on a wet, stormy day, when we had touched for an hour or so at his village on our way round the island in our boat. As a young man he had been in Queensland<sup>8</sup> with a friend of his called Noai. He used to tell with great gusto how Noai was a "very lazy man," and was always shamming sickness there. He would enjoy himself "loafing" about until his master or overseer appeared in the distance; then he would be in his house like a shot, and, by the time he was interviewed, would have violent pains in every part of his body. After some time of this, his master began to grow suspicious, and one day insisted on knowing where the pains were. After finding out where they were *not*, he said, "Well! what is the matter with you? I think you *gammon*."<sup>9</sup> "Oh, no!" said Noai, with an injured air, "me no *gammon*; sickness he gone *inside*!"

It was soon time for our service, and the people began to gather. When I went over to the large church, which had been specially built for the occasion, I saw, besides our own people, the crowds of angry, determined heathens who had seated themselves just outside the building and close to where I would stand, and where the candidates for baptism had already taken their places. The leader of them all was Uviliau, a real mischief-maker, and one who had often given trouble to the Christians. Before I began, I spoke to him and to his followers, telling them that these women had, of their own free will, come forward to receive baptism and to profess their faith in Christ. I said I intended to go on with the service, and they would have to answer, not to us, but to God, if they dared to interfere in such a solemn ordinance. I then said that we would pray. On this, Netai, who was sitting near me, said in a rather loud whisper, "You can shut *your* eyes, Misi, *but I am not going to shut mine*". During the



baptism of the women not a person stirred; the would-be murderers (for murder was their intention if they were thwarted) sat staring at us all, seeming afraid to make even the slightest movement. It was very touching to see these women, who were braving so much, standing up in the face of their enemies to confess their faith in Christ, and we felt that in all this trouble God was very near to them and to us. The heathen left Cook's Bay very quietly, and seemed, for the time at least, thoroughly subdued.

Tahamen lived on at Cook's Bay for a number of years. In 1890, Mrs. Robertson sent word that she wanted her to come and nurse our baby, Lilian; and Tahamen at once came across the hills to Dillon's Bay. What a devoted nurse she was! As Mrs. Robertson was not strong enough to have the child constantly with her, Lilian, with her two nurses, Notong and Tahamen, had a room near, and was tended night and day, turn about, by these two faithful women. When the child was about two years old and was about to go with her mother to Sydney, she showed very plainly her fondness for her native nurses, clinging to them and crying lustily when they had to say good-bye on the steamer. Notong, who was also feeling it keenly, kissed her over and over again, but Tahamen just gave the child one caress, and then, with her lips tightly closed and her eyes streaming with tears, turned, and without a word to any one else, stepped down into the boat. When dear Ohai died, Tahamen took her place as cook. Some years ago Mrs. Robertson thought she was not strong enough for that, and asked her just to stay on and help her in looking after and training the younger girls. She had her own house quite near ours, where the girls slept with her. Every day, when she was well, the faithful woman was at work, and, like Ohai, she

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never idled. It was a comfort to have one so reliable and trustworthy near us. Tahamen was a tall, straight, fine-looking woman, with clear-cut features, and had a most loving heart, though she often "bottled" up her feelings and rarely showed a sign of emotion. At the time of her death we were away. She had been left in charge of the Mission premises, and now sent for Lalim Nimpu and said to her: "Lalim, I am dying. Misi's house was left in my care; I give you charge of it now, and you must take care of it till they come. Give them all my love—I never 'broke their word' <sup>10</sup>—and tell them that I looked faithfully after everything as long as I could." The women say that she suffered a great deal, but was anxious to give no trouble to those who were looking after her. We miss her very much; she was so loving and true, and through all the years since she was admitted a Church member at Cook's Bay she lived such a sincere and consistent Christian life.

Our next Communion was held at Dillon's Bay in July, 1882. It was not such a large gathering as that of Cook's Bay, there being just six hundred and twelve people present, but I think we never had a more touching or sacred service on Erromanga. We were intending to leave very shortly for our trip to Canada, and a great number of people had been attending my classes and had now come forward for baptism. Among the two hundred and ten church members, one hundred and ten were admitted that day, and two of these were "Daniel" Usuo and Numpunari Williams, sons of Auwi-auwi, the murderer of John Williams, and Lilea, their young half-brother. Yomot and Atnelo were ordained as "elders". We had intended meeting in the Martyrs' Memorial Church, but found that it would be small—even for the church members—and it would have been a great disappointment to the many other Christians and even the

half-heathen not to be present at the service. So we held our Communion in the open air, on the grass near our own house. The women, in their simple, bright-coloured prints, and pretty handkerchiefs on their heads, were seated in one long line, and the men, also well and neatly clad, in another. The weather was perfect. It was a deeply interesting service to us all, and I thought I had never seen a more touching sight. As the emblems of Christ's broken body and shed blood were passed down the rows of dusky worshippers—many of whom had once been determined enemies of the Gospel, some of them even cannibals—we lifted up our hearts in gratitude to God, who had so blessed us in His work, and had brought such a glad day to *dark Erromanga*.

That winter we had an epidemic of influenza, and I took it badly myself. It was not long till H.M.S. *Espiegle* came to anchor in our bay, and when Captain (now Rear-Admiral) Bridge came on shore and saw my plight, he very kindly sent off at once asking the doctor to come and see me. The influenza had turned to slight congestion of the lungs, but, under God's blessing and by Dr. Dunlop's skill and attention, I soon became well. We could not feel grateful enough to both the captain and himself, as well as to the other officers, for their many kindnesses. The *Espiegle's* visit was a delightful one. On the Sunday evening that she was at anchor, Lieut. Lowry brought the men on shore, and had a short service and singing with them in our sitting-room. Although I was not in the room, my own was near it, and with the doors ajar I could hear—and with much enjoyment—the strong musical voices singing one after another of the old familiar hymns.

From the time of our settlement, and soon after the visit of Captain Moresby in the *Basilisk*, we have had a large number of H.M.'s ships here, and, without an

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exception, these visits have been very pleasant. Many of the officers and men have been deeply interested in our work. The natives make a great fuss when a man-of-war is sighted, and the "Sail-oh"-ing and cheering are tremendous. They look upon them as of *nearly* as great importance as the *Dayspring*; the little white vessel had always the first place. So many of the captains of H.M.'s ships have invited them to go off and see over the ships that the people are always greatly interested in everything. And the perfect order and cleanliness is in itself a valuable object-lesson. These ships leave behind them no trail of evil, nor heart-burnings, on shore, and always get a warm welcome from our people and ourselves.

Soon after the *Espiegle* left us, we took a trip in the *Dayspring* as far north as Epi, and were present at the settlement of the Rev. R. M. and Mrs. Fraser, of the Tasmanian Church, who had just arrived from Scotland. In November, the *Dayspring* again came from Sydney, and on board were Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie, returning from their visit to Canada. They had had a warm welcome there, and were now eager to begin work again. Meanwhile the Rev. Wm. and Mrs. Gray, from the Presbyterian Church of South Australia, had been settled at Weasisi, Tanna. A few months after this, Dr. and Mrs. Gunn, from the Free Church of Scotland, arrived, and took up work on Futuna, but as by that time we were on our way home we did not meet them until our return in 1884.

On the 7th of December, the *Dayspring* returned from the north. Neither Mrs. Robertson nor I can forget the love that was shown to us by our people when we had to say good-bye, and I think we had no idea till then how much we loved them. About five hundred

people had been gathering in for days before, from all parts of the island. That morning we had a short farewell service and also a marriage—that of Sempent and Numpunivi—in the church. I asked the people not to come off to the ship, but to say good-bye to us on the shore. Atnelo was left in charge of the station, while our dear, faithful, old Ohai was to look after our house during our absence. She was the nurse of our daughter Annie, and felt keenly parting with her and her mother. When Mrs. Robertson went to say good-bye to her neither of them could speak a word, and Mrs. Robertson came to me and said, “Do go and speak to our poor Ohai; I can’t; and she is feeling it all so much”. I went and asked her for a drink of water (though I no more wanted to drink it than to fly), and she got it for me at once, handing it to me without a word. I could see her mouth twitching as she tried to keep back the tears. I am afraid my going to *talk* to her did not do much good after all, but she knew what we, too, were feeling, and that we shared her grief. The natives were ranged in two long rows from our house to the shore, and we walked down between them, shaking hands with every one. After all the good resolutions, when it came to the last there was a general rush to the shore, and even there the women clung to and cried over Mrs. Robertson and the children. Captain and Mrs. Braithwaite were both with us, and Mrs. Braithwaite said, “I will never believe after this that natives have no affection”. I said: “Captain, can’t you do anything to show our gratitude?” “That will be all right,” was his hearty answer; and almost at once, at a sign from the boat, the little *Day-spring’s* guns boomed out a salute. Mrs. Robertson had only just seated herself in the boat, when a woman came running down to it and asked her for “thread

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and needles". Of course, she could have got these days before, but it never struck her to mention it until then. She had scarcely gone away before a man came to me for "medicine". I told him he could not get it now, and, "Anyway," I said, "you are not sick". "*Ah, but I may be before you come back again,*" he said. The general laugh that followed this brightened us all up.

We went off in the ship's boat, but had not gone far before we saw the *Yaros*, 'the Morning Star,' being pushed off from the shore, and the men scrambling into her. When we reached the vessel, we went right downstairs, and I went into my cabin, almost dreading to meet the men again. Soon the door was pushed open, and in a moment I was in Yomot's burly arms. Dear Yomot, what a friend he had been! Lilea, Usuo's half-brother, a bright, affectionate young fellow, was right behind him, and several more, eager to say good-bye once more. My wife and I felt leaving them very much, and were touched by their loving regard for us. It was almost a relief when the *Dayspring* had to weigh anchor, and the men got down again into the boat. "Why! I feel like crying myself," said the captain.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### YOMOT AND NOSOREKI.

I HAVE long been wishing to write short sketches of some of our Erromangans who have been specially prominent in forwarding the work of Christ on their own island. One of the reasons that have hitherto prevented me from doing so was my want of confidence in their stability and strength of character—a kind of underlying fear lest, after I had told how able and helpful these men and women had been in the past, they should at last become unsatisfactory and fall away from their former exemplary life, proving, perhaps a hindrance instead of a help to our cause. I am sure that all missionaries labouring among native races must feel this uncertainty about even the very best of their converts.

But, notwithstanding much that is disappointing in many of our Christian natives, I do think we should not fail to tell of their many good qualities and of the devoted lives that some of these men and women have lived for Christ. To withhold this would be unfair both to the natives themselves and to the Churches which support our Missions. For these reasons, and the loss to Erromanga by the recent death of Yomot, in September, 1899, I feel that I should say something about this remarkable man—a character, I think, almost unique in the New Hebrides.

Yomot must have been born about the year 1835,

and would therefore be about sixty-four years of age at the time of his death. He was born at a village called Unōva on the north-east of Erromanga, and about three miles from Potnūma, where Mr. James Gordon laboured for the five years immediately preceding his martyrdom. Yomot as a boy and young man seems to have been superior in strength and pluck to the youths of his own age on the island. In mere boyhood, he became not only a very strong and rapid swimmer but an expert in throwing the spear and in archery. He was fond of fishing and shooting, which fondness increased with his years, so that when I first knew him on Aneityum, in 1867, these sports had become almost a passion with him. As new and more modern guns were introduced, Yomot made every effort to possess one, and to the last I think he loved a first-rate rifle next to a copy of the complete Bible in Aneityumese and portions of the Old and New Testament in Erromangan. His house was a kind of "Tower of London," for he kept all his firearms, from an old lumbering blunderbuss up to the modern expensive rifle, perfectly clean and in order. No one ever saw Yomot, however tired he might be, put aside his gun after the hunt till he had removed the bullet or cartridge and thoroughly cleaned his gun. When I first knew him and right on up to the time of his death, he was far and away the very best shot on Erromanga, and in the seventies and eighties, when his sight was quick, he would bring down brace for brace of pigeons with the best shot in any of H.M.'s ships that visited the island. One day only a few years ago, he shot a black duck for me with his rifle. Thinking that it was only a happy chance shot, I challenged him to put another bullet in his rifle and try again. He did so, took deliberate aim, and duck No. 2 dropped in the water. When he picked it up, we



found that the bullet had cut through the neck, leaving just the skin of the upper side attached to the head!

But chasing the wild boar with his dogs in the forests of his own island was Yomot's favourite sport, and just because it was more risky and exciting. He would be slowly walking in front of or behind me, telling me something of the past—for he always talked on the road, up hill and down dale—when suddenly the dogs would fly through the bush and begin barking. Without a word, Yomot would throw down his "swag,"<sup>1</sup> and bound away into the bush to follow up the scent of the dogs. Presently the barking would increase, accompanied by wild snorting from the boar, which, by this time, had turned and faced the dogs. Every now and then the boar would charge at them, and woe to the poor dog that came in his way. But, while literally tearing that unfortunate dog, another dog would seize him by the hind-quarter or ear, and then for a few minutes the discordant yelping of the dogs and squalling of their victim would be simply deafening. Yomot, wild with excitement, would by this time be within shot, and, having called off his dogs, would speedily despatch the animal, providing himself and his party with fresh pork for the next two days. Often this has happened in our journeys from village to village, and now that Yomot is gone I always think of him in connection with these wildboar hunts. And, although such a hunt still often happens, it is of Yomot's share in them in the past that I speak.

They cannot wait till I dress the meat; so the men divide it into quarters, run a pointed stick through each piece, and, with all the guns and bundles they are carrying already, they tramp along with these huge junks of fresh pork. And so, all tired and hungry, we reach a village just at dusk. Should there be a teacher in

charge, he has everything ready for our comfort, and, if he has been told of our purposed visit in time, there is always a small hut built specially for my use. This will often have two rooms—one for a dining-room, the other for sleeping—and both will be beautifully neat, and as comfortable as the teacher has been able to make them. Upon a reed or bamboo table are a dozen or more drinking cocoanuts, and, if in season, oranges and pine-apples, while in a corner of the hut are the long, newly cut bamboo bottles filled with cold, fresh water from one of the mountain springs. Soon several native puddings, of all kinds and sizes, are brought in, all piping hot and excellent to taste.

Yomot and all his crowd have fared as well in the big *siman-lo* or feasting house of the village. But no sooner have they finished their huge meal than they begin to prepare for the oven the flesh of the hog that has been shot that day. Amid laughing, shouting and giving of orders (which every one gives and no one obeys), the food is at last ready for cooking, and will be left to steam slowly in the ground-pit until morning. But, during all these big preparations, tit-bits of the pork, and also yams and *taro*, are roasted and eaten, and after that follows the wholesale chewing, the half-eating, half-drinking, of dozens of sticks of sugar-cane. After a little time there is perfect quiet, and then there comes floating across the village square the plaintive strains of some familiar old psalm-tune. The hymn sung, evening prayer is offered up by Yomot, or, perhaps, by some other teacher, and presently all are fast asleep. And can't they sleep! To try to wake them is almost to try to wake the dead!

Yomot provided well for himself and his good wife and for any of their young nieces or nephews who might be living with them from time to time, and no one

ever saw Yomot idling. Though far from being a greedy man, he liked good substantial food, well made and well cooked. And what savoury dishes he could prepare! His wife, Navusia, was a true helpmeet to him, and set a noble example to the younger women. She was our boy Gordon's nurse, and a great deal with us all, but was too old to pick up much knowledge of housework or cooking, though she made a wonderful attempt now and again. When we went to Port Nari-ven, the house was always spotlessly clean; Navusia saw to that, and the dear, old body was there smiling her welcome, and fussing round to get us anything we wanted. Yomot would make us *fan*, 'very good,' soup, and a number of dainties, and, of course, the table was always set, for Navusia put every dish in the house on it. She had a marvellous way of arranging things, and was always charmed with it and her own forethought. She simply could not do enough for us. Ask Navusia for *anything*, and away she would trot and have it brought at once. Her sweet simplicity and trueness made every one love her. She lived a sincere life for Christ, and did her best to bring others to know Him. She died shortly before her husband at a ripe old age, and her memory will always be very dear to us.

But it was as a strong and earnest Christian man, an able and fearless helper of the Erromangan Mission, that Yomot distinguished himself above all his countrymen, though not previous to our settlement in 1872, for it was Sōsō and his brother-in-law, Netai, who were Mr. James Gordon's grand helpers. It was from the time that he joined the Church, in 1873, until about twenty years later, when his health began to fail very much, that Yomot—as a Christian man of strong common-sense, well read in his Bible, well grounded in the faith, fearless in advocating every good cause, and

as fearless in exposing and denouncing everything that was evil—stood head and shoulders above his fellow-islanders.

As a solid, instructive preacher of the Gospel he could hold his own with many in civilised lands. He brought "beaten oil" to the sanctuary, carefully preparing all his addresses. He did not interest young people and children so well as many of the other teachers, whose speeches were simpler and more pictorial. But those who were older, and especially those who took the trouble to follow him, profited greatly by Yomot's teaching. For my own part I never failed to be present if Yomot was to speak. His words were so clear and accurate and so forcible that one was sure to feel strengthened by them. He made no wild, rambling talks, never mixed up things in the absurd manner some natives do, and above all he kept clear of those ruts that so many of our New Hebridean teachers get into and never seem to get away from. They have the same introduction, the same bit of Church history, the same confession of their own sins and shortcomings, and, of course, the same sermon always, no matter what the text may be.

Yomot's knowledge of Aneityumese gave him a great advantage over the other Erromagans; for, up to the present time the whole Bible has not been translated into any language of the New Hebrides except that of Aneityum. Indeed Yomot was a linguist in the purely island dialects, for he knew the *enyau* as well as the *sorug* of Erromanga, those of Aneityum and Nguna, and a little of the Tannese as spoken at Port Resolution. He also understood and spoke fairly well colloquial English. He read with great ease any books printed in Erromangan, Aneityumese or Ngunesese, and could read slowly the Old and New Testaments in English.

But it was not so much by means of his knowledge of languages or his power as a clear and forcible preacher as by his own good influence and sterling Christian character that Yomot did such yeoman service in the first ten or fifteen years of our labours on Erromanga. He was a born leader and ruler. He could not help it if he would, and he would not if he could. Dr. Gunn, of Futuna, spoke of him once as "an iron man". He had lived and worked with white men, good and bad, knew them thoroughly, and they all respected him for his straightforward, manly integrity and independence. They knew he could not be twisted about their fingers, and thought all the more of him on that account. He was modest without being cringing, and was never ashamed of his faith.

I have spoken of Yomot as an athlete from his youth up until he was nearly sixty years of age. When I first saw him, I was struck with his splendid physique, every muscle seemed so firm and well-developed, and moved with every movement of his body. With his rifle over his shoulder, his strong, decided step of vigorous manhood, his beautiful dark eyes, now flashing as he described some deed of daring or denounced some cowardly act, now softening as he spoke of the sufferings and persecution of the early converts and missionaries of Erromanga, one could not help admiring him. A daring, cool leader in any contest, a champion of the truth, an able friend of the weak and oppressed, whether white or black, and the warm friend of all missionaries, Yomot was superior to any Erromangan I have ever known. That which will ever keep our love warm for Yomot is the memory of the way he stood by us in the "ten years' *conflict*" through which we passed on this island, beginning with our settlement in 1872. So solicitous was he for our safety that he never left the Mission premises

even to go as far as his plantation, unless he knew that some other strong man would stay near us.

And it was always Netai and Yomot and other "east side" men who stood by us in those days, and not the chief and people of Dillon's Bay, among whom we were living. These were always good friends, but had not the staunch love and faithfulness of the eastern people. Had Naling, the chief of Dillon's Bay, who was also a church member, been a man of any force of character, his influence among his people would have prevented many a trouble and heart-sore. But, although a bright, pleasant and intelligent young man, he was easily led, and the old, dark-hearted fellows around him could often turn him about whichever way they wanted. He was always gentle and respectful when I spoke to him, and would leave me with the full intention of doing well; but his old advisers and would-be friends were too much for him, and so he often disappointed us by following their bad suggestions. Was Yomot ever influenced by these old rascals? Never! They tried him in vain; he had "backbone," and was very different from poor Naling. Yomot, however, was not free from faults, and as he grew older he did not improve. Always accustomed to lead and to have the first place among the elders and teachers, he did not take kindly to the changes that time was making in himself and them. Many of the younger men were by this time better teachers than he was, and, being young and strong, could do more work. Whether he imagined he was being "shelved" or not, I cannot say, but he did not, at any rate, grow old gracefully; and often his strange, abrupt manner made a heavy demand upon our patience. But in spite of that, my wife and I could never forget dear, old Yomot for what he had been to ourselves and our little children during our dark days on Erromanga. With all

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his faults he was, perhaps, our truest friend on the island, and often showed his love in many ways.

About ten years ago Yomot's splendid teeth began to decay, and I believe his failing health had much to do with this. He suffered so much, that, as we were going to Sydney, in 1895, we decided to take him with us and get him a complete set of artificial teeth. This was done, and the dentist, being a personal friend and a good friend of the Mission, very generously made a considerable reduction from the usual charge. Yomot's new teeth improved his appearance very much, his health became better, and he returned home like a new man. We hoped that many years of usefulness were yet before him. Soon after his return, we relieved him of the charge of the school at Port Nariven, where he had been for many years, and only asked him to help in the Sabbath services and the weekly prayer-meeting. His work would be to visit the teachers and people of the different villages on the east and north-east coast as often as he could, and to encourage and help them with his advice in their work. Both Yomot and his wife were pleased with this plan; for they knew that, in suggesting it, we were studying their comfort in their failing years. I remember what a delightful talk I had with them both at their own house the morning I first spoke of it to them, and how pleased Mrs. Robertson was when I told her of their willingness. We had been a little anxious about it, knowing how Yomot loved to rule, and feared that he might imagine he was being put aside now that he was growing old. But Yomot was a good and sensible man, and at once fell in with the new plan. He was no ordinary man, and we treated him accordingly. Indeed, I have often been asked if Yomot was really an Erromangan. Many thought he must be a native of the Eastern islands, for he seemed

so much superior to the other Erromangans. Yomot under the new arrangement did the best of work, and, whenever he was able, visited regularly the surrounding districts. But his health was failing very much, and in September, 1899, he caught a severe cold which turned to influenza. He had no strength to rally from it, and on the twentieth of that month, after *forty-two years' devoted service* in this Mission, Yomot passed away from this world and entered the Eternal City. He was a "shock of wheat fully ripe," and, we doubt not, received from the Saviour, whom he had loved and served throughout his long life, the welcome, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord".

Nosoreki, who succeeded Yomot at Port Nariven, had gone as a young man to Fiji,<sup>2</sup> where he had been converted by a native pastor of the Wesleyan Mission. As soon as he returned to Erromanga, he built a school-house in his own village, and persuaded Norowo, the high chief of Numpu-norowo, to receive a teacher. Through Nosoreki's influence, we were at last able to settle one there, and had the delight of seeing the old chief become a true Christian. This was shortly before we left for Canada. When I visited him then in his large *siman-lo*, I saw that there was to be quite a ceremony. In the presence of two hundred of his people, the old chief laid down on the ground before me, one by one, all his idols or sacred stones, including the one he treasured most—a beautiful *navilah* called Nanepintaru, which is a woman's name. One of these stones had a very small *numpelat* or 'skirt' tied to it; another, again, had a charm in the shape of a pierced shell. The whole affair was such a surprise to me, a delightful one, and the dear, old man amused us by his perfect delight in his own doings. And not only that, but he did not



forget to try to lead his people and friends to his new Friend, and every now and again, while walking up and down between his relics, telling me the names and histories of one after another of them, he would stop, and, turning to those around us, plead with them to "take the word"<sup>3</sup> which was then doing so much for many on Erromanga. Norowo remained true to his testimony, and soon after this gave further proof of his change of heart by giving up all his wives but one. Before long, we had Niau, Nosoreki, and Naling settled in the large district of Numpu-norowo.

For years Nosoreki had been betrothed to Wampu, the daughter of a Cook's Bay chief. When he returned from Fiji, Wampu was still quite young and was being trained by Mrs. Robertson at Dillon's Bay. For some reason or other, she seemed to have a great dislike to poor Nosoreki, and, when the marriage was suggested, turned up her nose very decidedly. She was a dear girl and a good worker, and, as she had been with my wife from the time she was a child, we had grown very fond of her. But we did not sympathise with her at all in this dislike; for Nosoreki was such a fine young fellow, and we knew that he would make her a good husband. It would have been very different if he had been an old man, but their ages were very suitable. However, "Miss" Wampu took her time, and then all of a sudden veered round and found that she was very fond of Nosoreki. I married them before she had time to change her mind again, and she made Nosoreki simply an excellent wife. They were an exceptional couple in every way; both well educated and bright, and they proved good teachers. Like Noyé and his wife, and Ukina and his wife, who are now helping the Rev. F. G. Bowie on Santo, Nosoreki and Wampu trained their people well. Every year they brought us young men

and women to attend the Candidates' Class, and these had already been well taught by themselves. Wampu had her own Bible Class, and it was a pleasure to have her pupils passed on to us. The girls that she taught always seemed bright and capable, and several of them have from time to time helped Mrs. Robertson in the house at Dillon's Bay.

Nosoreki was an eloquent speaker, and had no difficulty in making any one listen to him. He had not, perhaps, the solid matter of Yomot's preaching, but what he did say (and it was always good) was said with such marvellous power and such a winning manner that he just rivetted one's attention. It was always a treat to listen to him, but I had to be very careful not to call upon him too often, for fear of creating jealousy among his fellow-teachers.

Soon after Nosoreki and Wampu were settled at Port Nariven, they took heavy influenza colds, and, as neither of them had ever been strong, it proved too much for them. I was with them at the time, and it was a sore grief when I realised that they were both passing away. Dear Wampu "fell asleep" first, and it was touching to see the dying husband's love as he tried vainly to crawl over on his hands and knees to where she lay. I made the men lift the body to his side. He touched it very tenderly, and then, turning to me, said, "I have no strength to 'cry'; <sup>4</sup> tell them all to 'cry' for my wife, for she has gone from us". But, before she was taken away from him again, the poor man burst into tears. Before that day had closed he, too, had gone to that land where God shall wipe away all tears.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### PHYSIQUE AND DRESS, ETC., OF THE ERROMANGANS.

THE inhabitants of most of the islands in the New Hebrides group are said to belong to the Papuan race. The natives of Erromanga are certainly very unlike the fine-looking people of Efaté, who seem to be a mixture of Polynesian and Papuan blood; but the appearance of the native Erromangans, I think, scarcely justifies the assertion that they are the poorest specimens and the lowest race in the New Hebrides. They are darker in colour than the Tannese, but still are far from black; a rich brown is the usual complexion. Here and there we find a really black native, but this is exceptional. There are also the fair freaks called the *nafolian*. Albinoes are not often seen; they are not specially noticed, and are called the *ovun-nesebo*, 'the white-skinned'.

The Erromangans are short in stature, the usual height being about five ft. four in.; but their bodies are well-developed and muscular. Though evidently one people, we find, towards the south of the island, very much taller and finer-looking men and women than those to the north, who are small and weak, and it is noticeable that the eastern tribes are, in every way—height, physique, strength—very much superior to the western. The finest people on the island are the men and women of Numpo-norowo, on the south-east. After our long years here we can tell at a glance to what

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district a man belongs. Of course, in some measure, their names help us, for these are peculiar to their own lands. On my first visit to Erromanga, I was struck with what seemed to me the defiant, sullen appearance of the natives. This, I think, is due to the deep-set eyes and projecting forehead. The nose is not large, but, having no bridge, except in rare cases, it seems very big; the mouth is large, but not always ill-shaped. The head itself is well-developed. The shoulders are sloping; the only square-shouldered man on the island is Owang, and he is not a pure Erromangan. However ugly the other features may be, the eyes are always beautiful, large, very dark and expressive; they are really lovely, and seem to be always a native's redeeming feature. Both neck and wrists are small. The chest and loins are well-developed. Natives seem to have plenty of lung power; climbing a steep hill is mere play to them, but in ordinary hard work they get tired very easily. That seems to be just the contrast between our work and theirs. A man will think nothing of carrying an enormous pole, or several of them, for building his house, but will draw back in dismay at a cask or heavy box. As children, their limbs are miserably formed; they have long, spindly arms and legs, badly shaped ankles, about as thick as the calf of the leg, and such huge, distended "corporations," that the body seems almost deformed. From the age of seventeen years or so the figure begins to improve, and, in a few years, the lank scarecrow of a boy, with limbs like pipe-stems, has grown into a strong, well-built and muscular man. An Erromangan's head is not always big; that is generally in proportion to the rest of the body. We have often noticed that some of the women have particularly small, neat feet; and, though they do a great deal of hard plantation work, their hands, as a rule, are small,

firm and shapely. A very fat person is a most unusual sight.

The less said about the costume of the Erromangan heathen man the better. They could not very well wear less or look more hideous in paint and dirt. The hair is always very bushy, but is never plaited, and is thus unlike that of the Tannese. One custom is to shave closely one side of the head, while the other is allowed to grow in luxurious tufts. In these is stuck a bamboo comb, about six or seven inches in length and rudely carved. In heathenism, anklets made of shells were worn and a chain of small shells was often placed just below the knee. Bracelets were made of the plaited *pandanus* leaf, and nearly every person—men and women alike—wore a necklace made of plaited *worenevau* or 'pandanus'; to that was hung a small shell, which was kept on from babyhood, and was simply a charm to keep away disease or danger. The men often wore armlets made of carved and richly polished coconut shell. The ears of both men and women are pierced, but the ear ornaments are very poor, being merely pieces of shaped wood and tortoise-shell. When first pierced, a small piece of *hibiscus* wood is inserted to keep the aperture open; this is gradually enlarged till often the lobe of the ear hangs away down towards the shoulder, and the hole then becomes a convenient receptacle for personal property of the smaller sort. Pipes are often carried in these, and boxes of matches also fit in nicely. As for loose matches, the man has a fine plantation for these a little higher up; for they find plenty of safe hiding-places in his bushy crop of hair.

The women in heathenism were well clothed with the long, graceful skirts, and the native cloth, *nemasitse*, which was thrown across their shoulders. The

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skirts are made from a number of different plants—the pandanus, the banana and the very young, white and pliable cocoanut leaves; also from the inner silky bark of the *worenevau*, from a species of *hibiscus*, from the *yalehoi*, and the stem of the *tampoli* or native cabbage. A woman will take great pains in making her dresses. In fashioning a pandanus leaf skirt, she first gathers the green leaves, choosing them the length she requires. These are bound together in sheaves, and it is quite a common thing to see her, as she returns from her plantation work, bearing the material for her next new dress on the top of her head, waving like plumes. The next process can take place while she and her friends are sitting gossiping together, and with her sleeping baby tied on her back, and the evening meal cooking in the ground, our friend takes out her fancy work.

The prickly edges are first stripped off the leaves by a small piece of bamboo, the rough centre vein being removed by her teeth. Next comes the patterning, and this is done in either of two ways—by the rough stem of the tree-fern or by her own sharp, white teeth. She may make only one dress at a time; more often she prepares several, and will use up the shorter leaves as skirts for the children, when they are too young to do their own “sewing”. But they learn this art when they are very small, and often just baby fingers will be seen twisting and weaving a tiny skirt for their owner’s use. When the patterning is done to her liking, the edges are fringed by the bamboo knife, the butt end of the leaf also being divided into short narrow strips. These are to be ready for plaiting on to the girdle later on.

The lady has now completed the first process, and at dusk, after putting the baby to bed and leaving her man in charge of it, she ties the green leaves into

bundles, and strolls seawards; for the material must now be soaked to make it durable. She places the bundles in shallow water near the shore, covering them with a large stone; fresh water seems to be as good as salt for the purpose, and the bundles of leaves are often put in the river. After a few days she uncovers them, and, taking them out of the water, spreads them on the shore or river bank to bleach. They are soon perfectly white and pliable, and are now ready for the third process. In her odd moments she has been preparing some soft *worenevau* for use as twine, and this evening, with her friends again gathered round, some of them, perhaps, engaged in the same work, she weaves the leaves of her skirt to the twine. Sitting on the ground, with her feet spread straight before her, she ties the *worenevau* to her big toe, and proceeds to twist it into a fine cord. When it is a few inches long, one leaf of the pandanus is taken, and the short strips, which have already been cut in the butt end, are laid over the cord, and woven carefully in with more of the *worenevau*. When the leaves have all been fastened in this manner, the lady finishes off with enough twine to tie the ends, and then skilfully detaches the cord from that useful big toe. The dress is now ready for use, unless she decides to colour it. A dye of a rich red shade is taken from the root of a tree, and called *nohorat*. The sap is heated, mixed with ashes, and then strained. Some of the dresses are simply buried in mud, which gives them a peculiar grey tint.

These skirts look very pretty when finished, and being very light are worn in great numbers at once. In heathenism as many as twenty or thirty are donned. A child wears them quite short, but, as soon as she is engaged, however small she may be, the skirts are lengthened to the ankles, and on marriage the very

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longest ones are worn. Some of those worn by the married women in heathenism are very long. The front leaves are cut so that they just touch the ground, while the others are left the full length and sweep out in a long train behind. These skirts are often from eight feet to nine feet in length. An Erromangan woman in full heathen costume is a picturesque sight—the long, trailing skirts helping to make her look tall and graceful, and from their custom of carrying all burdens, even very heavy ones, on their heads, our women have exceptionally straight figures and well-poised heads. The native cloth, the *tapa*, is brought under one arm and tied in a loose knot on the other shoulder. No ornament is worn in the hair, which is kept short, and perhaps only a string of beads round the neck and an armlet or two made of cocoanut shell. In heathenism both men and women were painted.

All women were tatooed; sometimes on the body and arms, and always on the face, generally on each cheek, and often on the chin. Now and again we see a man who has been tatooed, but this is not common. The marking was done when the girls were betrothed, and by other women, generally old ones. A sharp piece of bamboo was used, and the tatooing done in patterns of leaves with stems down the length of the face and single leaves if continued on the chin. The operation must have been very painful, but seems to have been cheerfully undergone, and we very rarely hear of girls who were unwilling to be *beautified* in this manner. A piece of the *nangai*, 'nut' tree was taken and heated over the embers till the sap began to ooze out, and this was allowed to drip into a bamboo receptacle. When enough had been gathered, a little of it mixed with some water was put into a cocoanut shell, and this mixture smeared over the face. That was allowed to stay on



from two to four weeks, and then all was washed off, leaving now only the well-defined markings. The tatooing, when well done, is not at all unsightly; some of the leaves are finely formed, and their dark, blackened veins show out well against the dull brown of the woman's cheek. But it is a barbaric feature of heathenism, and as such we have discountenanced it very strongly. We approve of the natives keeping up their old customs when these are innocent and good ones; but as so many of them are connected with their superstitious and often cruel rites this is not often possible.

The native cloth, which is called *tapa* on Samoa and on Erromanga *nemas-itsé* (*nemas*, 'cloth,' *itsé*, 'beaten'), is made from the inner bark of the banyan and one or two other large trees, and is always the work of the women. The bark is taken off in broad strips, and done up in bundles. Then, on a round, smooth log about a foot in diameter and eight or ten feet in length, one of these strips is laid. Generally two women work together at it, one on each side of the log. The 'beater' (*néko*) is made of *nokesam*, a very hard wood, which takes a high polish. With the exception of the handle, which is plain, it is often beautifully carved in patterns of leaves. Each woman has on the ground beside her a small canoe-shaped dish of fresh water and a whisk made of reeds. Every now and again the bark is sprayed with water, and, after it is beaten for a long time, another strip is added, overlapping the edge of the first one. The bark is so glutinous that in the constant beating the pieces join very quickly. As the women work, they draw the fabric from side to side of the log; strip after strip is added, principally lengthwise (for the cloth is always narrow and long), till it is one solid piece. The colour is now a dull white, and the material very like parchment in appearance. It is then hung over a

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bamboo or over some creepers tied between trees, and, while still damp, patterns are drawn on it with charcoal. The usual designs are the crescent moon (which seems to be used as a sign of and in connection with their sacred stones<sup>1</sup> and heathen festivals), birds, fishes, lizards, flying-foxes,<sup>1</sup> and usually the never-failing palm leaf and other leaves. Sometimes there is an attempt at drawing human beings, and we were very much amused one day lately when a piece of *nemas-itsé* was brought to us with weird illustrations of men on horse-back.<sup>2</sup> The artist was evidently a lady who moved with the times. One side only of the cloth is marked. It is left hanging till thoroughly dry, and then coloured with *nohorat*. Sometimes, though rarely, it is left uncoloured. The usual size of the pieces is about three feet in width and seven feet in length. On the island of Efaté it is made very much longer, and is elegantly finished with fringes of feathers. Theirs is also finer than the Erromangan *tapa*. I have never seen it, and, as far as I know, it is not made on any island south of that.

In heathenism the *nemas-itsé* was used as barter, and, as I have already said, as part of the dress of the women. And it was in a strip of this that a woman always carried her baby. The Erromangan children are carried on their mothers' backs, but now strong calico is used for this purpose instead of *nemas-itsé*. The numberless grass skirts of the woman make an enormous bunch at the back, which is a fine, comfortable seat for the child! The mother twists the cloth securely round it, brings one end under her left shoulder, the other over her right, and giving them a twist or two round each other, slips one end under the knot, and is ready to carry her burden any distance. The child is most comfortable, will sleep soundly, and it seems to be the easiest way for the mother to carry it. When the baby

is very young it is strapped in front, the woman's arm helping to support the tiny body.

I have spoken of the straight figures of the Erromangan women. It is marvellous to see the loads that they carry. It is quite a common thing to meet a woman with a child on her back, and a heavy load of yams tied together on her head, above that a bundle of sticks for her fire, and over her shoulder a large bamboo filled with water. She cannot but keep straight, and she has been inured to this from childhood. With a load like this, a woman can walk a long distance, and often has to climb hills, and yet will keep as erect and look almost as fresh at the end of her journey as when she started.

The weapons of the people are bows and arrows, clubs, battle-axes and spears. The 'bow' (*nefane*) is made from the *moré*, a species of acacia—a dark, heavy wood, in appearance something like walnut. The wood must be cut from an inland tree (for that will be tall and straight), perhaps five or six miles from the sea-coast. A section, about five feet long, is cut from the trunk and split into several pieces. One of these is taken, and is roughly shaped by axes to about twice the size wanted. All the rest of the work is done with a pig's tusk, for no sharp instrument is used for fear of cutting the grain. The bow is carefully shaped to about five feet in length and, perhaps, an inch at its broadest part, the middle, and from this it gradually tapers off to about the thickness of a lead pencil at each end. The *nelas* or 'string' is made of the inner bark of the *hibiscus*, and sometimes from the *nendemai*, which is a small shrub. The bow is bent on the knee, and kept tied for a while till it gets its shape. But after this, when not in use, the string is always left loose, being fastened only at one end. When needed it is tied in

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a twinkling, and it is wound in a very neat design round the narrowed part of the bow.

The 'arrow-shaft' (*nagesau*) is made from the stem of the tall reed-grass, a specially straight one being picked. This, of course, has its natural polish. The lower part of the stem of the tree-fern gives the head of the arrow. That wood is very hard, almost like iron in durability. This may be over a foot in length. The end of the head is barbed and ornamented with notches, and finished with a very sharp point. The butt end is also pointed, shoved firmly into the centre or pithy part of the reed, and bound with one strand of cocoanut fibre, which looks exactly like copper wire. The lower end of the reed is also sewed with cocoanut fibre to make it stronger. The shaft is not feathered, and the points of the arrows are never poisoned, as in the northern islands. There are usually six arrows to one bow; that makes the set. They are polished with cocoanut oil, and in time become of a dark brown or black colour and very glossy.

There are three kinds of 'clubs' (*nirom*), the "*telughomti*," the "*novwan*" and the "*netniuri*". The butt end of every club is surmounted by a flat, round knob; this is always carved in a pattern of four leaves; there is never any change.

The *telughomti* or 'star-club' is now very rare. It was only made on the south or south-east side of the island, and particularly at Numpu-norowo. The head is cut in the shape of a star of eight points, each perfectly finished. An old *telughomti* (and some that I have seen must be very old, having passed down from one generation to another) is as black as ebony and highly polished, and is very much valued by the natives. It was not so much in use for fighting as for a money medium, for they were given as special marks of favour at the great

feasts, and women were bought with them. As far as I know, the only other star-clubs in this group are those of Tanna, which are much larger, but inferior to the *telughomti* of this island. During a trip in the *Day-spring* at Epi, Captain Braithwaite told me that he had seen a splendid star-club, much finer than any we had on Erromanga. I recognised the club and the owner as soon as I saw them; the club was an Erromangan one which I had given him in exchange for an Epi one some time before.

The *novwan* ('seed') is an oval-shaped, heavy club, with a long bead or vein running down its whole length. It is also becoming rare.

The *netnivri* is the most common of the three. The head is finished in the same way as the handle, with the flat, disc-like top carved with four leaves. Just below this the club tapers off to a very small size. About ten inches down there are two more of these "discs" close together, and between these and the head "disc" the club has gradually been widened. Thus it may be about five or six inches in circumference just in the centre, but barely two or three inches where it meets the discs. The rest of the club is plain and small in size. These weapons, like the bows, are made principally with pigs' tusks. When finished, they are hung up to the ridge-poles of the *siman-lō*, far from the fire but in the way of the smoke. Every now and again they are taken down and rubbed with cocoanut oil, and in time this, with the constant smoke, gives the clubs a fine black appearance and rich polish. I have tried to get our natives to keep on making clubs, and I tell them they should never think of giving up the art. They have had every encouragement; for a good club will always fetch a ready sale. They say they can't make them as well as the old men—their fathers and

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grandfathers—made them, and no doubt this, in a sense, is true. For the old men of the past generation, having no implements but the rude axes and pigs' tusks, seem to have taken infinite pains and turned out work that is a marvel of neatness and perfection in form.

For about sixty years our people have had English tomahawks. They insert the blade in a handle of highly polished *moré*, having its end carved in the never-failing leaf pattern. In appearance the whole handle is very like a small club. They have a custom of winding bright-coloured strips of calico round the handle, and the "spear-thrower"—a cord made of pandanus leaf—was at one time always fastened to it. Their own early axes were of stone. Stones were picked as near the desired shape and size as possible, and then ground on other stones till quite the right size, and sharpened at one end. The axe was somewhat oval in shape, and from about four to six inches in width at the largest end, and tapering to about one and a half inches at the other. The wooden handle, about two and a half feet in length, had a bowl at the end, where it was tied to keep it from slipping out of the hand. The other end was very large, and had a hole dug out with pigs' tusks and sharp shells where the axe was inserted. It was then very firmly secured by strong twine made of coconut fibre, and sometimes cemented with the glutinous part of the *ulaveri*, the 'ground orchid'.

The *sau* or 'spear' of Erromanga is a very inferior article. It is merely a rudely shaped, strong rod, very like a fishing-rod, and is used both for fishing and for fighting. No pains are taken in the making of it, and it is rarely if ever carved. The end is sharply pointed and finished with large barbs and notches. A spear is from ten to twelve feet in length. After it is made it is generally weighted with a heavy stone, and hung

for some time to a large tree in order to make it perfectly straight.

Like the spear, the canoe of Erromanga is of very rough manufacture. It is formed from the trunk of the *nemar* or bread-fruit tree, and also from the *neblibli*. In early times, the log was first burnt away to a length and then hollowed into shape by the same means and by stone axes. The outrigger is made simply, and with no ornamentation. All the lashings are of the strong twine made of the cocoanut fibre. The canoes in use in the northern islands of the group are very much bigger and superior in every way to those made on Erromanga and one or two others of the southern islands. Strange to say, those again of Aniwa and Futuna<sup>3</sup> are fairly large and beautifully built; the Erromangan canoes seem very poor by contrast.

Huts, in former times, were built without posts or walls, as now, and were in shape not unlike a huge boat, keel up or "turned turtle". The ground was first raised from twelve to eighteen inches, then slender poles, about three feet apart, were sunk twelve inches in the ground. These were bent over and tied with very tough creepers to the ridge-pole. Across these, lighter poles were placed, and on this framework was a covering of reeds (the stems of the tall reed-grass) beautifully woven together. Over all this was placed the thatch of sugar-cane leaf, or reeds with their grassy tops, this being securely tied through reed-work underneath. This covering was very strong and yet cool. When it was to be used as a sleeping house, both ends were thatched, with the exception of a small entrance or doorway. The door was simply a plaited cocoanut leaf with hinges of creepers. These sleeping huts would be about twelve feet by eight feet. The modern hut has nearly always upright posts, with wall-plates

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instead of bent poles, and this, of course, is much cooler and more healthy than the old-fashioned style.

The large *siman-lō* (general cooking and sleeping house for the young or unmarried males) is almost always built in the old way—without walls. It has a very rustic and picturesque appearance. These *siman-lō* are usually from forty feet to fifty feet in length, and from fifteen to twenty feet in width. When we first came to Erromanga the *siman-lō* was, in every case, owned by a chief of rank. None of the common people dared to imitate the *fan-lō* or high chiefs, by putting up one of these houses. They were very large, and built with the utmost care and taste. In the south districts of the island, I have seen *siman-lō* which were over one hundred feet long, twenty feet wide and about twenty-five feet in height. Owing to the fires which were constantly burning in them, all the woodwork was black and shining, and was a very considerable improvement to the appearance of the enormous buildings, within and without.

Now, every young man who can get enough grass and wood together puts up a kind of *siman-lō*, and he will always find some "hangers on" to cook and sleep in it, who are too lazy to build a house for themselves. At the present time, there must be about fifteen or sixteen such *siman-lō* in Dillon's Bay alone, and there are not more than a hundred people in the village. The Erromangan houses are indeed very pretty when new, and, in my opinion, are much finer than those of the other islands. If the people would only take more pains to keep them clean, they could make them very attractive, but, unfortunately, the reverse is the case. There is not a mat, no order, nothing neat and tidy; but clothing, children, adults, knives, guns, axes, food and ash-piles all mixed up together, and hard it is to



say what the blackest thing is. Of course I am speaking of the very worst of them now. Some of our people, I must say, do try to make their houses more presentable, and those who are naturally clean and tidy will show their good habits in everything. Very good houses are built on Efaté. They are large and roomy, with doors in the sides, and often with projecting roof and verandah. The Efaté houses are clean, and the ground completely covered with excellent mats made by the people themselves, and raised seats placed around the wall. The wood of the Erromangan houses is of the best *moré*, the lashing being of split cane, called *teru*. The cord used in tying the thatch is made from the leaf of the pandanus or screw pine.

Fences are made of reeds worked in a diamond pattern, and the inner walls of houses are often ornamented in this way.

Erromanga, especially in the west coast, as I have said before, is not a fertile island, but generally our people have enough and to spare. The indigenous foods are: yams, of which there are twenty-six different varieties; the *ufilé*, or sweet yam; *taro*, of which there are seventeen kinds; the banana, of which there are at least thirteen kinds; *tampoli*, a species of hibiscus and called cabbage; beans; *nōvwané*, or horse-chestnut; another *nōvwané* ('seed'), out of which match-boxes are made by Europeans; the *yivoli*, or arrowroot; *nūpné*, or tapioca; *nié*, a wild, stringy root resembling yam in appearance; *nevi*; *yetu*; *wevi*, or rose-apple; *narah*; *nesi*, or papaw apple; mushrooms, etc. There is a large variety of the native fig, but, as it is not cultivated and allowed to run to waste, it is not edible. A fig tree that grows on Tanna bears a very fine fruit. I planted it on this island, and the natives are extremely fond of it. They often use the young leaves in the same way as their *tampoli*

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(cabbage). A wild native orange grows, but is quite unfit for use. The real orange, which has been introduced, grows luxuriantly. Mrs. Henry was the first to plant it; Mr. Gordon planted more, and, since we came in 1872, we have put out tree after tree, and have encouraged the natives to do so also. As far as I know, there are now about seven hundred trees on the island, and these bear on an average from five hundred to two thousand fruits during the season, which is a long one, lasting from about the end of February to the beginning of November and sometimes even later. The Erromangan orange is thin-skinned, large and juicy; we think it a perfect fruit. Unfortunately, any attempts to ship cases of them to Sydney have been failures, owing partly to the long sea-trip before they could be landed and the fact that the steamer could only call for them at certain dates. When these difficulties were removed, there still remained the expense of boxes, etc., and the then heavy duty charges in Sydney. So there has been no profit whatever. But regarding the suitability of the fruit itself, the trade opinion was that no better oranges had ever been on the market. It is a pity that the natives have not been able to make something by this export, for every year there are thousands of beautiful oranges going to waste. Lemons also thrive in abundance. Other fruits which grow well under cultivation are limes, the pine-apple, custard-apple, mango, guava, water-melon and granadilla. Maize corn also grows plentifully. Pumpkins, cabbage, onions and other vegetables are capable of cultivation, though our natives are not so industrious in planting these as they might be. Coffee grows very well on all the islands of the group; it has never been exported from this one.

The yam is the most important of the native products, for *taro* is not plentiful, and is rarely grown on

the west side of Erromanga. The yams range in length from about seven inches to four and five feet, but the usual size is about two feet in length and twelve inches round. I believe they grow to a much larger size on many of the other islands, but they certainly are not superior in quality to the Erromangan yams, which, I think, cannot be beaten anywhere. The very small yams, commonly known among white people as "chiefs' yams," are only *roasted* in the hot embers—*tovum*, as this is called. They are cooked to perfection in this way, and their taste is excellent. We think that yam is very much superior to potato, and never miss the latter, though many settlers and others use nothing but potato and never seem to really enjoy its substitute. The yam is planted in mounds. The ground for the plantations is first thoroughly cleared and burnt, all large branches lopped from the trees, though the trees themselves are not cut down unless too close together. The Erromangans do not adopt such an elaborate system of planting as the Tannese and others, but, though they do their work on a smaller scale, they take great pains in tending their gardens. They plant in the winter. When the vine of the yam begins to grow, it is trained on reeds from mound to mound, or, if anywhere near one, to a tree.

The big meal of the day is the evening one. When the people return from their gardens, about four o'clock in the afternoon, or often much later during the planting season, they begin at once to prepare their puddings. A great hole is dug in the ground and lined with a layer of stones. A fire is kindled on these, and on this again a number of fairly large stones are thrown. While the "oven" is heating, the food is prepared for it. Generally the "woman of the house" will attend to this, though her husband often helps. Banana leaves,

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which have had the thick part of the centre vein peeled off, are laid for a moment over the smoking fire. This makes them pliable and tempers them for the heat of the oven. The woman then lifts her yam, taro or banana, as the case may be, and, sitting on the ground with several layers of leaves beside her, she takes her grater—two or three of the prickly stalks of the tree-fern—and busily grates up and down until the food is like a pulp. If she is making a *neoki*, she now takes another leaf or dish in which cocoanut has been grated, and mixes with it the meat of prawns, which have been caught some distance up the river. This mixture is then laid on the mashed yam or taro, the outer part of this again being folded over the cocoanut in the style of a sandwich. The banana leaves are then carefully brought over each other, and tied up with the stem or centre vein which was taken off at the first, or with any creeper that may be handy. These have been placed under the leaves before the pudding is prepared, so that nothing need be moved in the tying. It is now ready for the oven, and the upper stones, which are by this time thoroughly heated, are lifted off with a forked stick, called the *woreso* or *worehuvi*. The fire is then poked away till the lower layer of stones is reached. On this are placed numbers of leaves, and on these again the *neoki*, which has just been made; leaves are thrown on top of this, then one hot stone after another. Leaves are again put over these, and all are covered in with earth and raised in the shape of a mound. The food is left to steam for about two hours. The earth is then scraped away by halved cocoanut shells, the *woreso* being again used for lifting off the stones. The *neoki* is found thoroughly cooked, and, when cut, shows the rich red of the prawn right through the cocoanut, the flavour of the fish giving the food a delicious taste.

An *opi-opi* is made by cutting up *tampoli* (cabbage) into shreds, and putting it between the yam instead of grated cocoanut. Instead of being used in that way, the cocoanut is mixed with a little salt water, and then strained on to the cabbage through a strainer made of the fibrous "cloth" which hangs from the bark of the cocoanut tree. The yam is folded over this in the same way as in the *neoki*.

Another dish, called *tampumpié*, is made by cutting up yam or taro into thin slices. In the centre of this, a fowl, well plucked and cleaned, is placed, and grated cocoanut, mixed with salt water, strained over all. This is a very dainty and palatable dish; the fowl is cooked to perfection, and we often have a *tampumpié* made in preference to having the fowl cooked in our own kitchen.

A kind of *neoki* is made by scraping out the seeds of the *nesi* (papaw-apple) and filling the hollow with grated cocoanut and prawns. Crabs are often used in place of prawns. Fish, almost as soon as it is caught, is rolled in leaves and roasted on hot stones or in the embers. Shell-fish are put into a bamboo and roasted, and beans are generally cooked in the same way.

When a pig is to be cooked, it is brained (not bled), then at once cut up into quarters. These are first singed over a glowing fire, then scraped with knives. They are not washed, but, after this, are turned on hot stones, and then scraped again with knives until quite clean—that is, what a native would call quite clean. They are then rolled in leaves, and cooked in the ground in the ordinary way. If they are very large, and a big "oven" is being prepared, the quarters are just thrown on the hot stones, with a layer of leaves under and over them. Huge junks of yams are placed here and there in the same "oven," and over all these the smaller roasts or puddings that are to be cooked. After the

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pork has been taken out and divided, it is often cut up into smaller pieces and made into a variety of dainty dishes.

The bamboo is used for a water-bottle; the pieces which divide the sections having been knocked out. These "bottles" are of all lengths from about four feet to ten or twelve feet, or even longer. Bamboos are often carved, principally in the leaf design and in lattice-work. Those used for the water are generally plain.

Fish, both from fresh and salt water, is plentiful, and very good. Among birds we have the large blue pigeon, parrot, parroquet, the sea pigeon, which burrows its nest in the ground by roots of trees and on high hills, the hawk (*sokewavi*), raven, white and dark owl, crane plover, thrush, king-fisher, the flying-fox (*nugkerai*), the swallow (*menuk sat*), the wild canary and many other birds.

When we took peacocks to Erromanga they were a great curiosity, and were very much admired. I was sitting on the verandah one day when a number of half-heathen were strolling round for the sights. One of them, who "knew a lot," was showing the rest the "lions" of the place. One of the last that they came upon was the peacock, strutting about in all his bravery and fine feathers. "Can you tell me what that is?" said the gentleman that knew. "No! I thought not, you ignorant fellows. Well," drawing himself up with a look of conscious pride, "*I can tell you; that is the bull!*"

I may be permitted to add here a few pages on some of the moral aspects of the native character, as the product of heathenism.

An Erromangan seldom, if ever, shows any sign of gratitude by look, gesture or speech, and no native from one end of the group to the other has the slightest particle of *permanent* gratitude. Gratitude for the

time he has, but it is short-lived. An Erromangan never speaks if a sign, such as the raising of the eyebrows, will convey his meaning. Except in very rare instances, he has no refinement in his manner, and will pass you what you want with his foot, if, indeed, he will trouble himself to do even that; more generally, he will point in the direction of what you want over his shoulder or with a toss of the head.

He has no respect for his elders, and obeys no one, and studies no one's interest but his own. He gives away nothing for nothing; there is no such thing as a *bond-fide* present. There is also no forgiveness; an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, to the bitter end; forgiveness is weakness in his eyes, or want of power to avenge. He never utters a word when very angry; so long as he speaks, you need not fear him, but as soon as he looks down and seems perfectly regardless and utters not a word, *beware*, for he is dangerous now.

Natives walk always in single file, no matter how broad the path or road. They follow the most even ground regardless of its zig-zag windings or how much it may add to the journey or distance. Women turn out of the path to give place to men, and even to small boys, and that, too, when the women are carrying heavy loads, and the men or boys are carrying nothing. Their food is prepared as it must have been by their forefathers, for they never change. No one will tell you his own name, if he can avoid it. They all have a name, and then some other name to distinguish them from other persons bearing the first name; as, John the grandson of James. They are distinguished not by the father's name, but the mother's father's, not by the father's father's. A mother never gives the name to her child, but this is always done by the father, and

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the child's real name must never be used although they all know what its name is, until the father announces the name; otherwise, the child would become sick and die.

They are imitators, never inventors. One man makes his canoe, hut, digging-stick, bow and arrows, club, fence, plantation, fishing-line, mat, basket and spear in every detail exactly like every other man before his time. They follow the curve line, the line of beauty, and are perfectly incapable of doing any work straight, the laying out of a house, for instance.

It is not that they are always *unwilling* to do a thing straight, I think, so much as that they do not seem capable of doing anything straight. In other words, there seems to be a defect in them in these matters. To them it does not seem crooked, because they have never done anything but what was crooked. Right-angles they never by any chance make; every corner is rounded off. True, after long training, a girl, say, may be made to lay a table-cloth straight or square on the table, but she does it parrot-like, and lays the plate, knife and fork just where she was told, but her ideas of straight and crooked undergo no change; straight and crooked are one and the same to her; for, once away from that special work, she will place anything else crooked, if possible. To her straight is crooked and crooked is straight.

I never knew any native to place a pair of shoes together with the right shoe on the right-hand side and the left shoe on the left-hand side. Never! Nor have I ever seen a native put a trunk or box down against a wall with the side on which the lock was to the front, but always it was hinges out, lock in, and often upside-down. In a word, if there is a possible stupid or wrong



way of doing a thing, that is almost to a certainty the way a native will do it.

You cannot give general instructions to a native, leaving details to his common-sense and to circumstances; no; you must be absolute, and say, "Do this, don't do that; it is right to do this, wrong to do that," and so on; not only to children, but to adults, both the ignorant and those well instructed. Unless you mention every little detail, and name the place where a thing is to be put, you are sure to find there has been bungling. They do not think, do not compare.

A sin is a sin, but it is being found out that generally hurts a man's mind, though frequently fear of sickness, or sickness to his child, makes him confess of his own accord. Punishment must be swift, or the feelings of the righteous will lean towards the offender.

Truth, in heathenism, was told only when it suited best, and no heathen would hesitate to tell a lie if it suited his immediate purpose better than the truth; or, in short, he never told the truth if a lie suited him better. Indeed, I find all these islanders very regardless—heathens and Christians—of the very truth most sure. And almost any departure from the strict truth is quite right, if thereby danger is escaped, or what appears danger. The end justifies the means. I often used to say to the young men who acted as my boat's crew for the time, when they told the heathen on the shore, who called to know where we were going and were told we were going to some place when we had no intention of going, that they had deceived these people. Their reply was: "Misi, if we had told them the truth, they would know where we were going and perhaps influence the people against us". Seldom is a man ever in the wrong; it is always "t'other fellow". I never yet could bring the direct statement of another man home

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to any native; he always wriggled out of it, and I am afraid there is not a native in the whole group I would believe on his own statement of a case touching himself. And I am never surprised at anything any man may do, or anything he may say, any day, however grieved I may be. Of course, Christianity is doing much to change the fibre of the native character.

It is not that natives are always *reckless* about the truth so much as that they seem utterly incapable of stating anything *definitely*, or stating a thing *just as it really occurred*. Perhaps this is largely owing to the fact that, until missionaries went among them and taught them the arts of reading and writing, a statement passed from one to the other in a free and easy conversational manner, and so the narrative grew as it passed on; and bits were dropped out, thoughtlessly, it may be, or perhaps with intent sometimes, and so in this careless, free and easy way the narrative was partly true and partly untrue. All natives exaggerate frightfully; they are Orientalists. An ordinary fowl is said to be, in size, a large turkey; a pig is as big as a boat; a small twig, which struck a man's face, he says was a huge branch of a tree; a yam he grew in his garden was as big as a large packing-case; when he made a small hack upon his hand when chipping, he cut his hand almost off.

In the same way, the native tales show that there were giants in other days. They say some of the men long ago were so immensely big that, when one of these huge giants sat down in the public square, his broad shoulders quite hid all the ordinary sized men who were sitting behind him. Not a native of this island but believes this. There were dwarfs, also, and they were so small that they could move along in the grass, attack, and even kill, big men instantly, as the grass concealed

their approach. One of these dwarfs committed so many murders among the people that they resolved to kill him. Kill him they did, again and again, but he always became alive again. Then they killed him and hurled him over a high precipice; but he immediately gathered himself together and rushed right up the rocks towards them, and they all fled in terror. They next killed him, as they thought, by chopping his head off, but he sprang to his feet instantly, picked up his head, and stuck it on again, and rushed at them, scattering them in all directions.

Finally they killed him, made mincemeat of him, worked these finely cut pieces of flesh into a pudding, and cooked it in an ordinary oven for some hours, but when they opened up the oven their pudding was raw meat. Then they gathered great logs, made a huge fire of these and heated immense stones; and, digging a great hole in the ground, they placed these hot stones in the hole, putting their finely cut dwarf-pudding in the very centre, and, having covered all in with leaves and earth, they cooked it for many days. This killed the fellow; life was now gone, but the pudding was so tough that all their combined efforts to eat it were vain; so they threw it down the side of a hill, and were never after troubled by *that* dwarf.

When a native offends you or acts wrongly in some way or another, he seldom comes to you to apologise or explain matters; he rather waits for you to speak to him, but he *is* waiting, and, it may be, is desirous that he should be reproved. He may bring a present of food (always food) to you; that is his apology. An Erromangan is rarely impudent or insolent to a person's face—that is, to a white person, and almost never to a missionary or his family—but he shows anger and his ill-will by neglecting his work, destroying something,

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disputing with servants about the Mission station and driving them away, by leaving church and school, or going away from the district or to Queensland in a labour vessel.

If a native in your employ should feel not quite well, he will just go to his hut and lie down, and, whether his duties are important to you or otherwise, he will never think of sending you word that he is ill, nor will he make the slightest effort to procure a substitute. If he should be the man who looks after the cattle and brings the milk, the inconvenience is most annoying. If he should continue ill for a week or month, you are expected to pay the man who performed his duties all that time, and, of course, pay him also for not doing them!

You employ a native at so much per day, week, month or year to work at any work anywhere you tell him, but if you send him to help with a teacher's house, say, he expects the teacher to pay him for that work, while his wages are going on with you. Or you send *your servant* away for some firewood in your boat with a few men you have employed for that special job of work, but when you pay them, when they have finished their job, he expects exactly the same number of shillings each one of those men gets, while he is being paid for his whole time. But traders and missionaries are changing all this nonsense and dishonesty, and it is high time. A native is hired, say for £6 a year, his board provided also, but if, during the year he should ask for cash now and then, to the amount in all of £2, and you give him £4, the balance due him when his year is up, he will ask you where the other £2 of wages are. I now discourage all I can the giving of any sum till his year is up, and then I take him in some evening, put down on the table £6 all in a row, as

straight as a ramrod, and coming down on each silver pound with my finger, I say: "*Sī, duru, desel, mindevat, sukrim, sukrim-mérékī*," that is 'one, two, three, four, five, five and one,' and ask him to rise and receive his wages and thank me. He does so. Then I say: "You got five shillings on such a day, John?"—"Yes," he answers. "Well," I say, "pay it." He begins putting down, slowly but willingly, the five shillings. Then I name the next payment, reading out the date and the name of the article he mentioned at the time, for which he wanted the money so much. He smiles, and says: "*Ko, ehe!* 'Oh, yes!'" And so it goes on until he has paid back all the advances he had got during the year, and, unless these take a very large proportion of his whole wages for the year, he is perfectly satisfied. He had the satisfaction of handling the £6, and paying in detail his petty debts from his salary!

I find the Christian natives of Erromanga, with very few exceptions, remarkably honest in money matters, and any little thing I have procured for them and they cannot, perhaps, pay for it at the time of delivery, or only in part, they are most honest in remembering it and paying for it, or any balance which may have remained, even to the small coin of threepence. Remembering what thieves and beggars they were when they were heathens, we are often amazed as well as encouraged and delighted at the wonderful change that has come over them in this, one of the highest and best tests of a good man.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE HEATHENISM OF ERROMANGA.

THE natives of Erromanga in their heathen state had no special god or gods, if we except the great Nobu, who made them and everything on the earth and in the water. They did not worship this Nobu, at least not in the same way as we look upon worship; but they venerated the spirits of their departed ancestors. All these spirits were evil, and roamed the earth doing harm to men. They had to be propitiated by offerings of food, which were placed regularly in the spots which 'the spirits,' the *natemas*, frequented. *The rats in those parts lived well*, and the people were easy in their minds when they saw that their presents had been accepted by the troublesome ghost-ancestors. As far as I can make out, they had no belief in a future state. When a man died, they said, "*Alo*, 'he has gone away,'" and become an evil spirit to haunt the living.

The sun and the moon, especially the latter, were sacred, and the moon is symbolised by their *navilah* or sacred stones. These *navilah*, they believe, were not made by human hands; they were given to them as heirlooms by their forefathers, who, in their turn, received them from the spirits. When a man was dying he generally sent for his son, or nearest male relative, and told him where the family *navilah* were buried,<sup>1</sup> for the ground was the Bank of Deposit where these precious relics were usually stored. Sometimes he died

before he could tell this, or perhaps, out of anger, he preferred to be silent, and thus deprive his successor of this heritage. Thus these stones might be buried for years and then suddenly be found. There was no risk of a stone not being recognised by the family to whom it belonged, for each *navilah* has its own name and history. Some bear a man's name, others a woman's, such as the one called *Nanepin-taru*, which had been handed down from one generation to another, and at last came into my possession. When we first came to Erromanga, I had great difficulty in getting any of these; for whenever a man became a Christian he, as a rule, forfeited his claim to the stone, and it had to be passed on to other members of his family. And the heathen, of course, would never part with them. Now, I can often buy them, though, in nearly every case, I am given to understand that I am wonderfully lucky in securing such a prize. I rather fancy there is a dodge in this; for when a man will not bring the stone in daylight, but insists on slipping round at night with it tied up in a lot of old rags, he generally expects a big return. The *navilah* is in the form of a ring or of the crescent moon, though sometimes almost straight. They are of all sizes, and when they are ring-shaped a man can easily <sup>2</sup> crawl through the largest, which weigh from forty to fifty pounds and are about five feet in circumference. They were also given as purchase-money for wives, and often, at their feasts, a chief will present another with a *navilah*, there being always an exchange of the compliment at the return feast.

A feast or *nisekar* was prepared by one chief in honour of another. A number of friends of the invited chief would accompany him, and, though they might not be at all friendly with the host, native etiquette made them perfectly safe, for they came under the

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protection of the guest. For many months before, yams and other root-food had been gathered and tied on to an enormous scaffolding about a hundred feet high. As the time of the *nisekar* drew near, pigs were placed within the scaffold enclosure, and fed till they were just rolling in fat; fresh yams and fowls also were added. The *nisekar* opened with a sham fight, as if to gain possession of the food, and, though the parties fought hard, it was all in good part. Those who won became the owners of the feast, but all joined in, and the whole time was then given up to revelling. Should the fighting get too hot, or if, perhaps, one side, remembering an old grudge, turned in dead earnest on the other, it often led to downright war. If a man was wounded in the sham fight, that was thought nothing of; but if, for some reason or other, his friends suspected treachery, they took revenge at once, and if the man was mortally wounded they would stop at nothing. Often, in a case like this, a visiting chief and his people had to "take to their heels" or be killed. Singing, dancing and feasting were carried on for days and weeks, both men and women taking part. All were painted. At these *nisekar* there was great bartering of wives, and much mischief, often murder, was plotted. A whole season was given up to feasting, and the people went from one chief's place to another, and had a thorough round of festivities.

Chieftainship is hereditary. A man cannot attain to this rank by any feat of bravery, nor can he be elected. The chiefs are called the *fan-lō*, 'great men'. A *nefori*, 'snatcher,' is an under-chief who has vanquished a higher one in war, and who then "snatches" his power and rights. 'A chief,' *natemnok*, is always a chief, even if he has not a single follower. The chief Tangkau, at one time, had only one subject—his wife. Chiefs had



a great deal of influence over their people, but mostly this influence was used only for evil. I could never settle a teacher in any village without the consent of the chief. When this was given, and his protection promised, we felt that, as far as the chief was concerned, the teacher was safe, and would be well treated.

War between tribes generally arose from woman-stealing or disputes about land, though it was often brought on by simpler causes. When a *natemnok* decided to go to war with another, he challenged him by sending some people to burn a house, cut down banana trees, or shoot arrows into the premises belonging to him. These insults at once led to battle. The attacking party would, if possible, take possession of a height, and rain down their arrows and missiles on the village below. If the villagers had been warned beforehand, great stockades were built round their houses, and with this protection they were often successful in driving off the enemy. If the fighting was in the open and a chief killed, his people were allowed to carry off the body and *wail*<sup>3</sup> over it. Both parties drew off for a little, and, when the mourning was over, started again to fight as hotly as ever. These wars, or rather successions of wars often kept on for many months, the contending parties going back to work in their plantations every now and again. Tribe after tribe would join in, until sometimes the whole half of the island was drawn into war, and perhaps this state of things continued for years. People from one tribe durst not visit another; and so, in 1889, when I was proceeding round the island, I found that some old men wanted to go with me, for they had never seen some of the districts that I was going to visit. Very few people were killed in war, though many were wounded; few were made prisoners, the men

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being generally killed outright, though sometimes taken alive and fed up for cannibal feasts.

My own opinion is, that, though the Erromangans practised cannibalism, they were not much given to it. The last case on the island occurred about twenty-five years ago. It is a thing that the old people seem *ashamed* even to mention, though some have confessed that human flesh, *nelat*, was very good. They did not often kill merely for the sake of eating, but when prisoners were taken they killed them for this purpose. The chief of an opposing party, if killed, was rarely eaten, but, as I have just said, his body was carried off the field. Infants who were not wanted to live were knocked on the head and eaten. There must have been, from all accounts, many white men who were eaten on Erromanga, and we know for a fact that the bodies of Williams and Harris met with this fate. The subject is so repulsive that I have rarely spoken of it to my people, and it is pleasing to see that the young generation have, as dear Yomot prophesied, forgotten or are in ignorance of these shocking deeds of heathenism.

*Nehave*, that is, the *kava* liquor, was regularly drunk every evening by the men. The *kava* plant (*piper methysticum*) is a little shrub about four feet high, belonging to the pepper family, with a large, round leaf about the size of a man's hand. The root of this was chewed by boys<sup>4</sup> until it was like a piece of rope. It was then laid in a wooden vessel, water was poured in, and the mixture strained through the fibre or *nougat* of the cocoanut tree; the liquid was served in cocoanut shells. No woman would ever come near the *siman-lō* during the making or drinking of the *kava*, and no boys were allowed to drink it. It has a bitter, astringent taste, and is, of course, a narcotic. Almost as soon as

it is drunk, it takes effect ; the man becomes sleepy and stupefied at once. We have often passed a *siman-lô* where it was being made, and have come back in about half an hour to find the drinkers lying here and there sleeping off its effects. It seems to make them stupidly good-natured, and they have often granted us any favour just after they have been drinking. Some of the old heathen still indulge in its use, though it has, of course, been quite given up by all Christians. Some years ago, when visiting different villages, a number of heathen and semi-heathen were often with us. When the usual evening hour for the kava-drinking came, they seemed really miserable without it, and would often slip away, one by one, to any heathen premises that might be near, to get a share of the bowl that was made there. It was never taken at any other time of the day but in the evening.

When a male child of a chief was born, *kava* was gathered, and that evening prepared and drunk by the father and his friends. When this was over, one of the number would ask the father what the name of his child was to be, and, on being told, they would call out the name so that all around could hear. There was no other ceremony than this at the naming of the child. A friend, who was a chief, might sometimes take the place of the father and give the name, but a servant or one of the people could not do so. A child was, and is still, always named after one of the father's relations, never after any of its mother's people, although actually the surname or distinguishing title is from the mother's side. For instance, besides his own name a child is always called "the grandchild, '*ohopon*,' of so-and-so,"<sup>6</sup> naming the mother's father ; and however many brothers and sisters he may have, if they have all the same *mother* they have all the same surname. When a man had a

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number of wives, two or three of his children might have the same name, but each would be distinguished by the name of his maternal grandfather. The male child of a chief was, in heathenism, not shown to the public until he had eaten food, and then this wonderful feat was publicly announced by the blowing of a shell. A female child was well cared for, though counted as of far less importance, and was not kept out of sight like the male child. Sometimes, if there had been several female children born and no males, the last born was killed at once, both parents being party to the deed, and no one thought of interfering. The child was theirs to do with as they pleased! But the infanticide of abortion was usually brought about by the mother drinking the milk of the young cocoanut, much heated. Deformed and sickly children were treated as kindly as healthy ones; for even in heathenism the Erromangans were remarkably kind and indulgent—too much so—to their children. Children were not taught any useful habits; they grew up in utter idleness, and uncared for, except that they got plenty of food. Their bodies were seldom if ever washed, their going into the water being simply for fun and to learn to swim, but not to rid themselves of dirt. With the exception of the inland people, the Erromangans, like most of the islanders, are fine swimmers, and seem to take to the water like fish. After a big sea they will play in the surf for hours; some of them, holding on to planks,<sup>6</sup> will roll in on the biggest waves, thoroughly enjoying the excitement of it all.

A girl was betrothed very young, but was not at once taken to her future husband's home, she lived with his mother or sister, and sometimes with her own friends, though this latter arrangement was not common, for fear of her being stolen or kept back from her rightful

owner. The girl's father and his friends arranged the match, but, according to their etiquette, the friends, not the father, made the first move; for he was supposed to be *narumprum*, 'ashamed,' to take much part in the matter. His wishes were first consulted, and then the negotiations were left in the hands of his friends. The girl herself was never so much as spoken to on the subject, though her mother was told of it. When the time came for her to be claimed, the mother would, on some night agreed upon, arrange to sleep with her daughter. The chosen man, accompanied by his friends, arrived, and placed a star-club and charms beside the sleeping girl. No sooner were they gone, than the mother and father would wake her, and tell her that her *husband* had come for her. If she happened to know him and perhaps disliked him, on account of age, for instance, and began to cry, she was told to be quiet; what had that to do with it? the man was her husband, and that settled it. Her mother then dressed her in long skirts with trains—the marriage dress—and she was at once sent off with her husband; if very young, to be taken to live with his mother or nearest female relative. The payment for the girl—made in star-clubs, *navilah*, food, etc.—often extends over years, and, for a long time after he is married, the husband is little else than a drudge to his wife's male relatives. In heathenism, marriage was frequently effected by capture. Girls were often exchanged, though both parties paid as well; and when a girl was given by one tribe, the people who got her were expected to give *in return* to her village their first marriageable girl. Since our Erromangans have become Christians, a woman may, and often does, have her own say as to marriage, and may decline absolutely the husband who has been chosen for her, and will not marry until she can marry the man she chooses.

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herself. In the Dillon's Bay village we have an "old maid"—an unheard-of personage in heathen days. This girl (for she looks quite young, though we know her age) has refused a number of eligible offers; it is said that she did not get the man she wanted and who wanted her, years ago, and so prefers "single blessedness" to having any other man. In heathen days, she would have been forced to marry at least twenty years ago. Cousins do not marry; to do so would be a great disgrace, for they are not called cousins as with us but brothers and sisters. A chief had from two to ten wives, but commonly not more than three or four. The wives were generally a great deal younger than he was; he might be about fifty or sixty, and their ages range from fourteen to forty years. There was always one, the oldest, who was called his "wife," '*retepon*'; the others were merely his *ovasiven*, 'women,' or *noete*, 'property'. The women did all of the hard plantation work, but, on the whole, were well treated by their husbands. When a chief died, all his wives could be claimed by his brother, though they were often passed on to other relatives. They were supposed to mourn for three or four months; the widow of an ordinary man mourned for forty days. During all this time they were not allowed to leave their premises, but had food brought to them by their friends.

After a great chief had been buried, *nahur* or mourning began, and was continued for several weeks. Besides the relatives and friends of the deceased man, professional and paid mourners<sup>7</sup>—old women—gathered in. Day after day pigs and fowls were killed, and great ovens of food prepared and eaten. This was to do honour to the dead, to show what a great man he had been. Many of the mourners assembled before he died, and the dying man often gave directions as to how

the ceremony was to be gone through, and would feel distressed, '*narumprum*,' if his death was long in coming, fearing that his friends would be tired of waiting for it. The weird death-wail was carried on nearly the whole of this time; for, even when the real mourners stopped now and again, there was still heard the crooning of an old white-headed and blackened "professional". Long poles were roughly sunk in the ground, and brought together in a circle, often round a tree, and inside of this was thrown all the rubbish of old food from the feast—for the gathering really was a funeral feast.<sup>8</sup> Such was the *nahur*; it was a sort of an ornament to the memory of the dead man, whose spirit was then supposed to dwell there. It was never pulled down. All over the island we come upon these old *nahur* grounds. During the last week or so of the mourning, a great hole was dug in the earth, a fire kindled in it, and pigs and dogs were killed and thrown in, with food on top of all. The wives of the dead chief all sat round this hole, wailing, and wearing their garb of widowhood—very short skirts and necklaces made of small black shells. If the brother or other male relative of the deceased husband now wanted to claim one or all of them, he walked up to the circle, lifted from their necks the mourning necklaces and threw them in the hole where the rubbish was burning. The women then belonged to him, and, as they were no longer widows, their wailing ceased, and they at once followed their new owner. If a married woman died, her husband was only expected to mourn for about a week—the mourning consisting of merely sitting still.

People were buried either in caves or in the ground, the earth being hollowed out to a depth of a few feet. A filled-up grave was not in the shape of a mound, but was recognised rather by a depression of the soil.

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The grave of a great chief was not covered in ; the man was laid on his back with a layer of cocoanut leaves upon him, and was supposed to "keep an eye" on all that was going on around him. Bodies are always prepared for burial by being tied up in cocoanut leaf mats. There was a case, soon after we came here, of a man at Nugkon-nu, near Cook's Bay, who fell into a trance, but as his friends thought he was dead they proposed to bury him. So they wrapped him in plaited leaves, and a great wailing went on for some time. They had to carry the man some distance to the grave ; this they did, and, as they thought, put him safely under ground. He had been semi-conscious while being carried, but could not move, nor could he call out ; but as soon as the earth had been lightly thrown on top of him he recovered, and found himself very neatly done up in the "shroud". As he was naturally anxious to get out of it and was very lightly covered with earth, it was an easy matter to extricate himself again. The shock of burial must have given him new strength ; at any rate, he was able to walk back to the village, and the consternation of the people can be imagined when they saw the friend, whom they had carefully buried an hour or so before, strolling back to his house. In heathenism, the poor fellow would have been killed as being "possessed".

Usually a person is prepared for his burial before death. When a man sends to his house for his best clothes we know what that means, and, strange to say, even if he is not so very ill, if he once makes up his mind to die, die he will. During sickness the Erromangans are well cared for by their friends, and this was true of them as heathen also, though it is often in the little attentions that they are sadly lacking ; perhaps they leave a dying man for hours without once



wetting his lips with water, not because they want to neglect him but because he has not asked for it! Just at the last, they will make all kinds of savoury dishes, which the poor man cannot eat. Just before the end, perhaps, he will take a longing for sugar-cane, and this is generally the last nourishment a sick person takes. Some of our people, however, are exceptionally kind to their friends when they are ill. There are women who will care for their dying husbands with every tender attention, sitting hour after hour fanning them, and doing all in their power to make their last moments peaceful. Our natives have no fear of death, or, if they have, they never show it. As Christians, they trust in their Saviour with a simple, childlike faith.

In heathenism no death was put down to natural causes; it was all the work of *natemas-ivai*, 'witchcraft'. If a man wanted to cause the illness or death of another, the *neteme sokowar*, 'sacred man,' was consulted. If the man could take him a piece of sugar-cane that the other had been chewing and had thrown away, or anything belonging to him,<sup>9</sup> such as some of his hair, all the better. Sugar-cane seemed specially good in helping witchcraft, and if a man's enemy managed to get a piece that he had been eating he counted himself very fortunate. For this reason, a person never threw away, if he could help it, anything that he had been eating, but was careful to burn it. The sorcerer mixed the sugar-cane with mud and certain leaves, and, mumbling some incantation over it, doomed the owner to severe illness or death. Very often the man did take ill and die—from fright, having heard of the "evil influence" over him. The *neteme sokowar* was well paid for his services. Sometimes the bewitched man could persuade him to remove his curse; this was an expensive operation, and always required big pay. There were many of these

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sorcerers all over the island ; they lived apart from their tribes, and were generally deformed or maimed of a limb. Novwai, the sorcerer, was the one consulted by the Dillon's Bay people, and he lived along the coast at Raumpong ; he had one eye out. On his becoming a Christian, the name of Simon was given him. Owing to their big fees the sacred men were able to live well, and, besides these fees, presents of food were constantly given in order to obtain their favour. They were both feared and hated by the people around.

Wind and rain-makers were also sacred men. If a canoe was going to Tanna or Aniwa, the people waited till the wind-man gave them favourable weather. Of course, the first good wind that came was his wind, though it was often, "owing to their miserable pay," late in coming. There were also storm and drought-makers. The thunder-makers lived in the Dillon's Bay district. Yams were never eaten till pronounced good by a sacred man. The *neteme sokowar* believed fully in his own powers. In the beginning of 1879, a strong westerly gale brought a big sea into Dillon's Bay, and the bar of the river was completely blocked. I kept a number of men working for three days to clear the passages. Noyé was one of them, and laughingly told me that there was an old rain-maker at Unepang who was saying, "Why are Misi and the men going to all that work? I am going to make a big rain that will take all that spit away." The rainy season was just about over, but on the 1st of April the rain began and poured down for about four days with scarcely a break. The river rose to such a height that canoes were carried out to sea. The bar that had been blocking the river was completely swept away, and the passage was as clear as we could have wished. It was no use to insist that the old Unepang rain-maker had

nothing to do with this; even some of our professing Christians, I am sure, believed that it was his work. For they cling to their old superstitions and find it hard to give them up. I never saw anything fit in so well as that rain did.

The sacred men also acted as doctors. Their remedies were often good, but they had many "charms" which were supposed to help in the work of curing, and it was these that were thought most of. Among some of their cures were poultices made from leaves, poultices of decayed wood, drinks made from heated *nesi* or 'papaw apple,' and other fruits, and the "baking cure," which is used in cases of fever and weakness. An oven is made in the ground, and after it is thoroughly heated in the usual way, by hot stones, these are removed, and the patient is laid in the hole on leaves. The hot earth is then filled in over him, all the body, with the exception of the head, being completely covered. He is "steamed" for half an hour or an hour, as may be necessary, and is taken from the oven when he has thoroughly perspired. Also bleeding is practised a great deal.

A native will nearly always speak of things with exaggeration. A man may be preaching to half a dozen people, but he will address them as this *nusian netevokontu*, 'a great gathering of hearers'. Speaking to them, he will say: "All you chiefs here, old men, young men, children and women"—the women always last. If you ask a man: "Where is so-and-so?" you will be answered, not in the singular, but in the complimentary plural,<sup>10</sup> "They are here". Proper names are often distinguishing, such as *Nompwot Navilar*, the 'red Nompwot,' *Nompwot Nesebo*, the 'white Nompwot,' *Nari Tantop*, 'tall Nari,' *N. Vagkau*, 'N. the crooked'.<sup>11</sup> A young man in Dillon's Bay was often called *Wav-in-dowi*, 'a rat for

ever'. As a child, he had been a long time creeping before he learnt to walk. *Wap* is a term of endearment, and is used to a child. *Itemen* is the word for "father," "his father," "the father," and *dineme*, in the same way, for "mother"; but *nate* stands for "my father," and *namé* or *namo* "my mother," and in speaking to and of parents these are the terms used. Some years ago the natives were evidently so charmed with the English "Papa" and "Mamma" that they took to teaching their children to call them that. One day I was doing some work on the roof of the church, and heard a plaintive little voice calling, "Papa, papa!" Without looking, I said, "Yes, dear; I'll be down in a moment". I was rather taken aback when, after getting down the ladder, I found a little black urchin waiting for its papa! We made our children call us "Father" and "Mother" after that. A native calls his father's brother his "father" and his mother's sister his "mother," while his father's sister is only his "aunt" and his mother's brother his "uncle". The children of his father's brother and his mother's sister are nearer relations than those of his father's sister and his mother's brother. The former are his "brothers" and "sisters," while the latter are merely "cousins". Often an old man will be called *nate* and an old woman *namé*, out of love or respect. Relationships are sometimes most confusing. A man will introduce another to you as his "brother". "Your real 'brother'?" you will ask. "Oh, yes; my real brother" (*avugsai itnesog*). "The same father?" "No; not the same father." "The same mother, then?" "Oh, no; not the same mother." "Well, were your father and his father brothers?" "No; he is *avugsai pela*, 'my brother, but a distant one'." If by this time you are not too hopelessly confused, you will probably find out after a little that, as children, they lived and played

together in the same village. And that is how they have become brothers.

To call a man your father, *nate*, your brother, *avugsai*, or your son, *netug*, is the greatest token of your love or respect.

It was amusing one day to hear our little Lilian, then about six years old, and her little playmate, Uluhoi, saying good-bye to each other. They held each other's hands, and looked into each other's eyes, then Uluhoi said, "Ah, Lilian!" "Ah, Uluhoi!" she replied. He wrung her hand again and said, "*Ah, Lilian pau sorug, kemampé!* 'Ah, my dear Lilian, you are going away!'" And the little thing answered, "*Iowé! Uluhoi pau! mori kos, avugsai pau, netni nate im nate mohopon itais im uyo sorug!* 'Oh, woe is me! my dear Uluhoi! we have grown up together, my brother, the child of my father and mother and the grandchild of my grandfather and grandmother!'"

## CHAPTER XX.

### OUR VISIT TO CANADA.—STATISTICS OF THE NEW HEBRIDES TRADE.

OUR visit to Canada <sup>1</sup> was in every way a very delightful one. Friends there took such a real interest in Erromanga, and we felt that our meeting them again after an absence of nearly twelve years did much to deepen that interest; for we were able to tell them of our work, and how God has so blessed this once dark island. We had arrived in Sydney from Erromanga on the 1st of January, 1883, and reached London in the following March. We spent altogether two months in England and Scotland, and in Glasgow were the guests of our warm friends, Mr. and Mrs. H. Barnett. While in Scotland I heard of the death of my father. Just before leaving Erromanga, Mrs. Robertson, too, had had the same sad tidings, the death of her father. The double blow seemed specially hard, as we had been looking forward to our meeting, and expecting to see them so soon again.

In the *Hibernian* from Liverpool to Halifax we had very bad weather. Off Newfoundland several icebergs were sighted, and the ship had a very narrow escape from one of them. About thirteen miles from Halifax harbour, we were caught in a dense fog, and for about twelve hours made almost no progress. I was in my cabin, laid down with an attack of fever; and when every one was thinking that we were not to get in

till the next day, it was delightful to hear, about four o'clock in the afternoon, that the pilot had come on board. Two hours later we were alongside the dock.

The very first person to welcome us home was Mrs. Burns, wife of Dr. Burns of Halifax, Nova Scotia; she was president of the Women's Foreign Mission Society. Very soon after her came the Misses M'Culloch, of Truro, Mrs. Robertson's close friends—indeed, relations. Mrs. Burns very kindly invited us all to her house, but we told her that we had already arranged to stay at the Halifax Hotel. "Well, it shall not cost you anything," she replied. Not only was our board there paid by the generous members of the Foreign Mission Society, but we were not allowed to pay for anything while in Halifax. When I went to pay our cabmen, I found that they had been paid beforehand. I had been "done" this way once or twice by Dr. Burns; so the next time I made the man promise that he would take no money from him. Unfortunately, Dr. Burns got hold of him soon after, and made him promise to take none from me. So I had just to give the thing up as hopeless. When I went to take our railway tickets, the day we left Halifax, the clerk handed them to me in an envelope. Somebody had already bought them. Certainly the generous Halifax friends were determined to give us every chance to save money.

On the first night after our arrival, we were at a hearty "welcome" meeting given by the Women's Foreign Mission Society. A number of ministers were present, and among them the Rev. Robert Murray, a warm friend. How kind every one was! It was good to have been away to get their kind and loving welcome, and to see the deep and sincere interest shown in our work on Erromanga. The following day we spent at Truro with Dr. and Mrs. M'Culloch and their

daughters, and the next day again we were met by Mrs. Robertson's youngest sister and brother. Mr. George Dawson drove us himself to Little Harbour, Mrs. Robertson's home, where she had the joy of meeting her dear mother again. The next day, taking my two little girls with me, I went to Avondale, my own home, and spent a delightful week there. We caught trout in the same little brook that I had fished in as a boy. It was, indeed, a joy to my wife and myself to be with the dear home-folk again.

Very soon after our arrival, I had a letter from an old friend and fellow-student, the Rev. Wm. Cruikshank, of St. Matthew's Church, Montreal, asking me to take meetings there, which I did. After being in Montreal I also addressed meetings in Quebec and in our Canadian London, where I met a great number of new friends and renewed old friendships. In November of the same year I was again in Montreal, being present at and addressing three meetings—one on Home Missions, one on Foreign Missions, and the third under the auspices of the French Evangelisation Society. By God's blessing, I believe that all the meetings did a great deal of good in deepening the already keen interest felt in our work. Erromanga had had such a thrilling history that hearts were touched by hearing how Christ had led us and had blessed us and our faithful teachers in the telling of His love to those sitting in darkness. I was thankful that I was able to go to every place where meetings had been arranged, and never missed one through ill-health. Though the weather was often bitterly cold, and though I wore not even a muffler, I never once had a touch of sore throat. A great number of congregations—from Cape Breton in the east to Lake Huron in the west—were visited, and it was simply marvellous to see the kindness of every one. Mrs.



Robertson was a great deal with me, and we made many warm and life-long friends. During our stay in Canada, I was able to collect three hundred pounds for the support of my teachers, another three hundred pounds (in which was included one hundred pounds for making a road across the island) for Mission use on Erromanga, and four hundred pounds to go to the fund for a new (steamer) *Dayspring*. This last was at once, of course, handed to the Committee of my Church, and the money still lies at fixed deposit in a Halifax bank. Altogether a sum of one thousand pounds was given, and of it, I think, the money subscribed for teachers was particularly helpful. Before this time we had had no regular Canadian fund from which to pay our teachers. The parents of a young lady who belonged to Rev. Dr. Steel's congregation in Sydney, after her death, had put aside the sum of one hundred pounds for the Erromangan Mission. The interest of this was given every year to support a teacher. It was a great help to us now to have a large sum subscribed by kind friends in Canada, who, for many years after, bore the support of our teachers, until the Erromangans were able to support themselves.

Perhaps one of my most interesting visits was that to Alberton, Prince Edward's Island, where the relatives of the martyred Gordons lived. I had the pleasure of meeting two of their brothers, one of whom was an elder in the church, and I was able to tell them a great deal that was of sacred interest to them. They were, both of them, tall, splendidly built men; for the Gordons were a handsome family. They were interested in seeing my little boy, Gordon, called after the martyrs, and they gave us a very warm welcome to their homes. It was a pleasure, indeed, to be able to tell them and other friends in Alberton how greatly God was now

blessing the labours of the noble men who had laid down their lives for Christ's sake on far Erromanga.

As I have said, Mrs. Robertson was often with me when going through Canada, but, during all the time we were there, our children were under the kind and loving care of their grandmother, Mrs. Dawson, at Little Harbour. It was a comfort, indeed, to know that they were in so good hands when we were away from them. But time sped on, and at the last we felt very keenly the parting with our dear ones at home. After a good-bye visit to Avondale, we left Little Harbour in a "snow flurry" one winter morning. As far as New Glasgow, we had with us Mrs. Robertson's two sisters and two of my brothers; Mrs. Robertson's youngest sister, Miss Dawson, was also with us for some time longer, which made the travelling much pleasanter for us. At Truro we were, of course, with Dr. and Mrs. M'Culloch and their family, with whom Mrs. Robertson felt parting almost as keenly as with her own mother. We then went to Amherst, Monckton, and St. John, where we spent the New Year week, and then to Montreal by way of Boston. When in Boston we had the pleasure of getting to see over Longfellow's house, perhaps in rather a questionable way, as some persons may say. With a few friends we first interviewed the housekeeper. "The family are away," she said, "and I have strict orders to give no one admission." "But," I said, "we will soon be leaving America, and do not know when we may have this chance again." "It would be strictly against orders; I can't do it," she answered. "Oh, well! I am very sorry," I said; "*I am the Bishop of Erromanga.*" "Oh, I beg your pardon, sir," she said; "will you come right in?" I stepped aside to let the ladies go first, but all insisted that "the bishop" should lead the way. We were taken into Longfellow's study,

saw his manuscripts and other things of interest, sat in his favourite chair, and Mrs. Robertson brought away a fern leaf as a memento of the place. But it was a sore trial to me to go through it all, and see the look of respect on that honest housekeeper's face, and hear those tiresome people behind me calling me "bishop" at every turn. I breathed freely when we got safely outside again, and were able to indulge in the luxury of a hearty laugh. Of course I, like other Presbyterian ministers, claim to be a Bishop of the primitive sort, "an overseer" of a flock.

We had only intended staying in Montreal for a few days. We were to leave in the beginning of the following week, and on the Sunday I was able to give two or three addresses, speaking in the Erskine Street Church at night. We were the guests of our warm friends the Rev. R. H. (now Dr.) and Mrs. Warden, and on Monday morning Mrs. Robertson went out to say good-bye to some friends. The cold was intense (twelve degrees below zero), and she caught a severe cold which developed into pleurisy. She thought at first that it was island fever—a bad attack of it—and when I came home that evening she told me it was nothing but that. During the night, she got rapidly worse and a doctor was sent for. He at once suspected what the trouble was, and very soon told us that it was pleurisy. For nine days my wife lay at death's door, but by our loving Father's blessing on the skill of Drs. Rogers and Ross and the tender nursing of Mrs. Warden, she then rallied. We feel that we can never repay the marvellous kindness of Dr. and Mrs. Warden during that anxious time—they were true, true friends. Mrs. Warden would allow no one but herself to wait on Mrs. Robertson, and, though she must often have been worn out, she

was always the brightest and most tender-hearted of nurses.

We left Montreal on the 1st of February, 1885, Mrs. Robertson having been taken out the day before in a sleigh to see if she could stand the cold. I tell her now that we have to thank her illness for giving us the chance of being present during the gay Winter Carnival there, and of seeing the famous Ice Palace of Montreal and the tobogganing.<sup>2</sup> It was built of huge blocks of ice cut out of the St. Lawrence River, and brilliantly lighted with electric light. On the night of the "storming," it was attacked with great rockets by a party of five hundred, and, of course, bravely defended. When the attackers had been driven off, they retired in perfect order. It was a most picturesque thing to see the five hundred snow-shoers, in their white blanket-suits and each carrying a lighted torch, winding up Mount Royal. At Sarnia we had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Thomas Nesbit, manager of the Commercial Bank there, and a son of the late Dr. Nesbit, of Samoa. After eight days spent in San Francisco, we left for Sydney in the steamship *Australia*, Captain Ghest. We arrived in Sydney on the 12th of March, being welcomed on the steamer's deck by Captain Braithwaite and the Rev. A. W. Murray, who had returned from the islands in very ill-health, and who died in New South Wales not long after this. Captain Braithwaite gave us the news of Atnelo's death, but on the whole his account of Erromanga was very encouraging. We were eager to get back to our people again after our long absence, and were glad when we were able to leave Sydney on the 1st of April, though we had the sorrow of parting from our three dear children, for we took only our youngest back with us. But we were leaving them in good hands—the two little girls with the Rev. S. and Mrs. Ella

and their daughters at Petersham, and their brother at a boys' school near. And Gordon was left also under the special care of our dear friends Mr. and Mrs. Anderson,<sup>8</sup> who had proved such a father and mother to him in his baby days.

We had a pleasant trip in the *Dayspring*, our fellow-passengers being the Rev. J. H. and Mrs. Lawrie, returning to Aneityum, and the Rev. Charles and Mrs. Murray on their way to Ambrim. I had written to the teachers from Canada, telling them that we should be back about the 25th of April. Of course, after that, they expected us on the 25th, not a day earlier or later, and very fortunately we did not disappoint them. We had been at Weasisi, on Tanna, that morning. It was raining heavily; so only Mr. Murray and I landed, and had a hurried visit to Mr. and Mrs. Gray. Mr. Eyre, the first officer, followed us on shore with a message from Captain Braithwaite, saying that if we went back at once to the ship then, he would do his best to land us at Dillon's Bay that evening. So we left, but when we were off Bunkil, on the south of Erromanga, we were in a dead calm, and were almost giving up hope of getting to Dillon's Bay that day. However, our good captain ordered the boats to be put in the water, and after a time with hard pulling and a little breeze that sprang up, greatly to our joy, we rounded the south point, the "Steps" of Dillon's Bay. We soon caught sight of the Martyrs' Memorial Church, and our own house, nestling among the cocoanut trees, and people running hither and thither in great excitement. They rushed to the boat-house, and, after unlocking the gate, seemed to change their minds, and ran away again. We found out later on that, as it was a Saturday, a number of the stronger men were away at their gardens, and those who were left could not have managed to carry the

boat down to the water. However, very soon numbers of men came running down, and, shortly after we anchored, the boat shot out of the river mouth; Usuo, Noragu, Lilea, Nangerevit and a number of others were in her, and all gave us the warmest of welcomes. It was just about sunset then. We afterwards learned that Naiyup, who, after Atnelo's death had been appointed as the Dillon's Bay teacher, was just starting to another village to hold a short service when Owang, who was in disgrace at the time, called out to him: "A nice thing for you—the teacher—to be going away and Misi coming along there in the *Dayspring*". Naiyup turned, and, sure enough, there was the ship just in sight at the point. Owang rose in his own and everybody else's estimation, as having been the first to see us. He promised to try and do better, and so at our home-coming we were glad to be able to bring him back to the village again.

With Mr. and Mrs. Murray we were soon on shore, and were very much touched by the warm and heart-felt welcome our dear Erromangans gave us. They seemed as if they could not do enough for us. We were charmed with the neatness and cleanliness of all the Mission premises. Dear old Ohai, who had been left in charge, had everything in perfect order; even the very pins that Mrs. Robertson had left on her dressing-table had been carefully rolled up in paper. A small slate that used to hang in my medicine room, and on which I marked down anything that the natives wanted, was still there with some writing done two and a half years before. Ohai had kept it just as it was; for though she could not read a word herself she had a profound reverence for writing of any kind. She came down to meet us, her face all aglow with pleasure, and soon took charge of our three-year-old "baby," hugging

the child as if she would never let her go. Watata, too, had proved very faithful during our absence, and the church, our house, and the boat were painted so thickly that the flies and ourselves stuck to them!

Mr. Annand had supplied Captain Braithwaite with the money for paying the teachers, and after all had been well paid there was a balance of sixteen pounds. I had left forty teachers, and found forty-four at work when I came back. Yomot and Atnelo (up to the time of his death) and other teachers had written to me regularly, and they had in every way acted nobly. We found everything in a very encouraging condition; the work had gone forward, and many new converts had been won to Christ. Captain Braithwaite had called regularly in the *Dayspring*, and had been a good friend to our people. Mr. Mackenzie and Mr. Annand had the management of my stations during my absence. Yomot sent word to them that a few couples were waiting to be married, and as at the time neither Mr. Mackenzie nor Mr. Annand could visit Erromanga, Captain Braithwaite was commissioned to tie the knots. The captain was very much interested in the "job," but, unfortunately, after getting the marriage service off by heart and everything in readiness, he, too, was unable to call at the island. The next trip Mr. Mackenzie was on board, and married the waiting brides and bridegrooms.

By the Tuesday after our arrival, hundreds of people had gathered in from Ifwa, Cook's Bay, Portinia Bay, Bunkil and Il-Efaté. Presents of food and pigs—no less than twenty-seven of them—were given to us. We gave seven very large ones to the *Dayspring*, and a number of the others were killed for the banqueting that was going on day after day. The very generous gift of the people was a complete surprise to us; they

had been fattening up the pigs for months—some of them so fat that they were almost blind—and, as Yomot said, each person had “given of his own free will, eagerly, and as a token of his love”.

In July I dispensed the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper at Dillon's Bay. We had a large gathering, and met in a large, beautifully thatched “church” that At-nelo had built just before his death and specially for this occasion, as he knew the Martyrs' Church would not be big enough. We brought back with us from Sydney a fine horse and a cart. The cart was, I fancy, the first in the New Hebrides. Both were a gift to the Mission from our people, and cost fifty-five pounds, the money being got from the sale of their arrowroot. Mr. Gordon's old horse “Bessie” was dead, and the new one, “Dolly,” proved a splendid help. A little later I bought another horse for Mrs. Robertson's use. The money had been given to her at home for that purpose, and it was a great convenience, while we had them, to have the use of two horses.

As soon as possible, we began the big work of making a road right across from Dillon's Bay to Port Nariven. My first idea was to make it ten feet broad, but, after some miles of this, we saw that it would need a fortune to keep it open. Those who have lived in these islands know how rapidly everything grows, and how hard it is to keep even the ground near our houses clear of shrubs, for they grow just like weeds. Of course, a great number of men and women were kept on that work, and what with food and payment, it seemed as if the money for the road would soon be gone. So we decided to content ourselves with a well-cut bridle-track right across the island. It is about twenty-five miles in length, and broad enough for all the uses we have ever had. It is now used constantly, and is kept



open by the people themselves, being thoroughly cleared every year.

During our stay in Glasgow, I had a most generous proposal from Mr. H. Barnett. He offered to take charge of all the arrowroot that the Erromangans could make, and to find a sale for it in Scotland and elsewhere. Needless to say, I accepted very gratefully his generous help; for up to that time we had not always found it easy to dispose of the arrowroot; and the year we went home we took it with us to Canada. Since our return to Erromanga in 1885 up to the present time, Mr. Barnett has taken all this work upon himself. Every year all the arrowroot is packed in casks and shipped to Glasgow, and from the time it reaches him Mr. Barnett is never idle a moment until every pound is disposed of. Through his untiring efforts, his friends and others have got to know and like the arrowroot, and we and our people owe this true friend a deep debt of gratitude for all he has done and is still doing for Erromanga.

The bulb of the arrowroot plant is gathered when ripe, that is in the winter months, and, when a sufficient quantity is ready, the bulbs are then thoroughly washed. At Dillon's Bay it is always carried up the river some distance and washed in the running water of the stream. The bulbs vary in size, but resemble a potato both in size and appearance, being of a dull brown colour. It is generally the women who wash the bulbs and scrape off the outer skin. Of course, none but perfectly healthy people are allowed to assist in this work, and these are careful to don their cleanest and simplest garments. When the bulb is washed and ready for grating, it looks more than ever like a round potato. All are laid on clean leaves, and now the labour of the men begins. At the other villages tin graters are used; but at

Dillon's Bay we are advanced enough to have a machine for the purpose. After it is all grated, water is poured over it, and the whole well strained through cloths. By the time all this is done it is generally pretty late in the day, and the arrowroot is left covered up in the tubs for the night. The next morning, the sediment having sunk to the bottom of the tubs, the water is clear and is poured off. The arrowroot is again washed and strained through the cloths, and this process is repeated perhaps three or four times more, until it is perfectly white and clean. The men then carry all the tubs down to the Mission premises. Then arrowroot sheets, made of washed, unbleached calico, are laid on the smooth grass near the church or on the clean gravel square in front of it, and the arrowroot is cut out in pieces from the tubs and spread on these to dry. Two or three men are always at hand to break it up into smaller pieces as it dries. If the weather is fine and sunny, all should be thoroughly dry in a few days, and ready for sifting. If too dry, it will not sift so well as when almost dry. After the drying is over, it is again laid out in the sun, and, after a second sifting, is ready to be put in bags. We make it up into 3 lb., 5 lb., 7 lb. and 10 lb. bags, and these are packed in strong, hard-wood casks for shipment. The largest quantity made in one season on Erromanga was 5,000 lb.; the last shipment was 3,000 lb. The money which the sale of the arrowroot realises is used to defray the cost of printing the books of Scripture in Erromangan and for other Mission purposes, such as the fifty-five pounds given for the horse and cart, and the purchase of corrugated iron for the Dillon's Bay and Port Nariven houses. During our stay in Canada, I had one thousand copies of the Gospels of Matthew and Mark printed, and in 1890, in Sydney, copies of the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles

in one book. I have just made arrangements with the British and Foreign Bible Society for the printing of three thousand copies of the New Testament. The Erromangans have already paid over to the Society an instalment of one hundred and fifty pounds towards defraying the cost of the printing, and another instalment of, perhaps, one hundred pounds, from the sale of the last shipment of arrowroot will, I hope, shortly follow this.

For the last four or five years our people have made a special share of arrowroot, the proceeds of which go to the Teachers' Fund on the island. *They now entirely support their own teachers*, agreeing that the Canadian Church, which has helped them for so many years, should not be asked to do so any more. The Erromangans are not a rich people; they have very scanty means of making money, and so it seemed only right that a portion of the arrowroot profits should go to this object. In one year £100 was collected in the different villages to help to support the teachers, but they are not always able to do so well in money. A few years ago, I began taking a marriage fee of ten shillings, which was to go to help the Teachers' Fund. To my delight the idea "took," and, though no one is compelled to give, there is scarcely a bridegroom who is not eager to give something, and most of them manage to raise the ten shillings. Although not exactly "off their heads with joy," they are generally in the best of humours on their wedding day, and think nothing of the fee. At one marriage, after the bridegroom had handed me his money, I was taken aback by the bride shoving five shillings into my hand. She would not hear of taking it back; so I came to the conclusion that she was well satisfied with her bargain. In 1899, I

was able to hand over £3 6s. 6d. of marriage fees to the Teachers' Salary Fund.

I have been trying to reduce the number of teachers on the island during the last few years. The population is decreasing sadly, and we are urging the people to come more into the central villages where they can be easily reached; and in that way one teacher could overtake the work that was formerly done by two or three. At present the number stands at about twenty, and all are working well. Our Erromangans are not so willing to go to help as Teachers on other islands now as we should like, but at present we have several couples assisting missionaries elsewhere, and these, I am glad to say, seem to be giving every satisfaction.

The rapid decrease of the population has just been mentioned. At the last census, taken in 1894, when I went right round the island on foot, the number, not counting those on hire in Queensland or other places, stood at 1,500, and in these last few years I know even this small population has sadly lessened. Without doubt the strongest factor in the depopulation of this island, has been the Queensland labour traffic.<sup>4</sup> In the first part of our life on Erromanga, when there were no regulations for it, the labour traffic for Queensland, and especially for Fiji, was little else than a slave trade. Fortunately this state of things has passed away. We never have any but the Queensland ships now, and as far as their *regulations* go, they—the regulations—could scarcely be improved. Each vessel carries a Government agent, and from what we have seen and heard, natives "recruiting" are treated with every kindness, and are well cared for. Both captains and Government agents have, in nearly every instance, treated us with the utmost courtesy, and, as friends, they are always welcome in our home. As far as I know, and I mention this with

the greatest of pleasure, no person in any Queensland labour ship has ever given or sold liquor to an Erromangan. But that which is in itself bad cannot be regulated, and I have no hesitation in saying that this labour traffic has been a *curse*, and *nothing but a curse* to our island. Boys and men, from fourteen years old to forty, the pick of the people, are taken away in large numbers, and very few of these ever return. In 1896, two ships took away from Portinia Bay alone, the one thirty-nine and the other eleven young men, and altogether in that district a hundred men and boys were taken away. Three schools had to be closed. No more harm can be done in that bay now until the boys have time to grow up. The most revolting part of the "recruiting," to my mind, is the practice of giving money as an engagement fee. Of course, this money is not given him as pay, it is handed to the man who is intending to ship to do as he likes with it, but as a matter of fact, in nearly every instance, he at once passes it to his nearest relation, and it is looked upon as *pay* or *compensation* for his leaving. In cases where the man has not given up this money I have had complaints that "So-and-so left, and no *nipmi*, 'pay,' was given to his friends by the people in the ship". This has a distinctly bad effect, and is one of the worst features of the traffic. In Queensland the recruits are well treated, and speak kindly of their masters. Christian ladies and gentlemen there take the deepest interest in them, and classes are conducted regularly for their instruction. There is no doubt that, on the whole, they are very comfortable both in the ships and on the sugar plantations in Queensland, but the climate is very much against them; they belong to a weak race and easily succumb to disease. And I repeat that, though those in the traffic have often proved themselves not only gentlemen but friends, the traffic

itself has been *against us and our work* from the very beginning, and is a *dark, dark blot* on the colony of Queensland.

The year after our return from Canada an old man named Nokesam, accompanied by a few friends, unarmed, made a visit right round the island. He was an ignorant man, but a sincere Christian, and was eager to speak of his Saviour to the heathen. His visit, the fact that he and his party took no weapons and showed such confidence in every one, did a great deal of good. About this time, we were disappointed in one of the northern villages, and had to withdraw our teacher, Molep. Molep and his wife, Nuferuvi, had been settled there for some time, and seemed to be getting on well with the chief, Nokilian, and his people. We were pleased with Nokilian's eagerness and his kindness to Molep, but after a time he took a longing for another taste of heathenism, and listened to the chiefs around him who were urging him to give up the school. So one bright morning he set fire to the schoolhouse, and, to put us off the scent, to a little old hut of his own. Any fool can light a conflagration, but it needs some work to stop one; and, much to poor Nokilian's dismay, the flames spread to the teacher's house and to a large *siman-lō* where he had two guns and a box. By the time he called help, it was almost too late to save anything; but Molep managed to get out all the arrowroot that had been stored in his house, and the tubs, too, though these were badly damaged. Nokilian was in great distress about his loss, but we at once suspected that he was at the root of the mischief. He blamed the heathen; they had, he said, burnt the buildings in anger, and wanted to drive his teacher away from him. I sent word that, if he really wanted the Gospel and was willing to give up something

for it, he should bring his wife and all his belongings to Dillon's Bay; they would be made welcome there, and would be away from the influence of his heathen friends. As I expected, he did not come. I saw it would not do to leave the teacher there, and so sent the boat to bring back Molep and his wife. We found that Nuferuvi, just before leaving, tried once again to persuade Nokilian's young wife to go with her to Dillon's Bay, telling her how sheltered she would be there and how she would be able to worship without fear. But the chief's wife, I am afraid, had no longing for that, and answered Nuferuvi with a quick "No! Dillon's Bay," she said, "is an open country, and all go there, *but my spirit has ever dwelt in the wild woods.*"

We purposed to build a small one-roomed cottage about ten miles north of Dillon's Bay, at Fui, near the village of Naliniwé, the old chief; we could easily go there by boat and often spend a week or two with the people of that district. And the house was to be built on the hill, and thus it would be a real change to us if we should happen to be in ill-health. Our people very generously gave the money for the building out of their arrowroot fund, and helped us much in putting it up. Old Naliniwé was delighted that we should think of going to live near him, and whenever we were there he and his wives loaded us with kindness. He was a dear old man, simple as a child, and yet no fool. Shortly before his death, he was admitted as a member of the Church on condition that he should give up his second wife. He promised faithfully to do so, but the poor man found it very hard to comply, and we never could find out whether she had really left him or not. Whenever we saw Naliniwé she was always "just going". His was the only case where we admitted a man before he gave up the second wife, but after all I was not sorry

for doing it, and we knew that he died a true Christian and fully trusting in his Saviour. While building the house at Fui, I one day sent Netai with others to Mrs. Robertson at Dillon's Bay, and as I knew she had not been well, bade him tell her that she was on no account to let anybody bother her by wanting to barter. Netai agreed. He saw Mrs. Robertson, gave her my letter, in which I had forgotten to mention this, kept her busy the whole morning bartering, and then when he went to say good-bye he added, "I was to tell you, Misis, that you must not think of working too hard, and if any one comes wanting to sell yam, you must just say 'No'." He smiled most sympathetically, too, as he said it!

In 1887 Mr. and Mrs. Annand, who had returned from their visit to Canada,<sup>5</sup> arrived in the islands. While at home Mr. Annand had nobly offered to go to the large island of Santo, and leave Aneityum where he had been so long. Santo had always had a warm place in the hearts of the Canadian people, and the fact that Mr. and Mrs. Annand were so generously offering to open up a new station on that large island had a cheering effect on them. A very warm interest was taken in their plans, and they came back to their work followed by the prayers and good wishes of many in the Dominion. Three new missionaries had arrived from Scotland—the Revs. A. Morton, T. Watt Leggatt and J. D. Landels; the two former being chosen to represent the Church of Victoria, and Mr. Landels the Church of New South Wales. They reached the islands in November of 1886, too late in the year to be settled anywhere by our Synod, so that the four settlements took place during the winter of the following year. As there was likely to be so much work to do, the *Dayspring*



Board chartered the *Cairndhu*, a vessel of 160 tons, to help the *Dayspring* that year. The *Dayspring* arrived at Erromanga first. We had almost decided not to go to the Synod, which was to be held in the north that year, but on learning of the *Cairndhu*, we arranged to wait for her. I was very busy at the time making a cellar under our house, and could not leave the work till it was finished. Four days afterwards the vessel arrived, and we were pleased to see Mr. Eyre, the chief officer of the *Dayspring*, as captain. He was a general favourite; always so kind and obliging, and, what was still better, a sincere Christian. We picked up Mr. Mackenzie and his son Norman at Erakor, Mrs. Robertson preferring to stay with Mrs. Mackenzie until our return. We reached Ambrim before the *Dayspring*, and on her arrival the Synod was held. Mr. Morton and Mr. Leggatt were appointed to Malekula, Mr. Watt to help in their settlement; Mr. Landels was appointed to Malo, and with Mr. Annand, Mr. Mackenzie, Mr. Fraser, and myself was to go to his station in the *Cairndhu*. We soon arrived at Malo, and the people seemed delighted to welcome Mr. and Mrs. Landels. Land was at once bought and cleared, and the work of building begun. The boat went once to the small island of Tangoa, off the mainland of Santo, and it seemed such a suitable spot for a Mission station that Mr. Annand wished, if possible, to build his house there. We were to have had the ship's boat to go again, but before we could carry out our plan there came the unfortunate wreck of the *Cairndhu* on the reef off Malo. All the cargo was saved, but the ship was a total wreck. The chief officer, with a native crew, at once offered to go south to tell the captain of the *Dayspring*. They met that ship at Malekula, and, as soon as he was able to leave, Captain Braithwaite came north to Captain

Eyre's assistance. Before his arrival Mr. Annand resolved to take some of the timber for his house over to Tangoa. He himself built a raft, and the loading was towed on this behind the boat. In two days the ground had been bought and cleared, the foundation of the house built, and a rough road made to the shore. We were all charmed with the picturesque site of the house. The Mission station at Tangoa is very pretty, with the grass on each side of the house sloping right down to the water's edge, and large trees dotted here and there and giving a delightful shade. We stayed at Tangoa for six days after the arrival of the *Dayspring*, and the house-building went well ahead. When we returned to Malo to pick up the ship-wrecked crew, the *Cairndhu* was sold at auction. Arriving at Tongoa,<sup>6</sup> we found Mr Mackenzie's boat there. Mrs. Mackenzie and Mrs. Robertson had heard of the wreck soon after it happened, but having no particulars about it were very anxious. Fortunately, they soon heard from Captain Wylie, R.N., of the safety of all on board, and some of Mr. Mackenzie's strongest young men offering to go and meet us and take us news from Erakor, Mrs. Mackenzie willingly agreed, only bargaining that they should run into no danger. It was thus an unexpected pleasure for us to get letters at Tongoa, and Mr. Mackenzie was delighted with the heartiness of his natives. Mr. Michelsen had wisely insisted that they should go no further north. When we reached Havannah Harbour of Efaté, on our way south, it was arranged that we should stay all night on shore, and the boy Norman was promptly put to bed. Mr. Mackenzie and I went for a stroll on the shore; it was a charming evening, with a light wind, and we must have been both struck with the same thought at that moment, for just as I was going to speak,

Mr. Mackenzie said, "What do you think of rousing the men, and going in the boat to Erakor?"

"Splendid!" I said; "but what about Norman?"

"Oh! that will be all right; I will soon wake him," said the unsympathetic father. In a very short time we were ready, Norman staggering up, rubbing his eyes; and, saying good-bye to Mr. and Mrs. Macdonald, our hosts, we were off. The wind dropped soon after we left, and so we had to pull all the way; but we had a good crew, and by daylight were in the beautiful lagoon at Erakor. The *Dayspring* arrived that same day, and we were glad, after our long absence, to be landed at Dillon's Bay again.

About this time a number of people began to come regularly to the schools. Usuo was a great help to us now, and was very soon made a teacher. The Sufa people still held out, but some began to get more friendly, and several, among them old Novwai, attended school now and again, though they were never regular in coming. Novwai had a niece, or, as he called her, a daughter, named Naimpin, whom Mrs. Robertson took into the house for training. The old man was passing one day, and happened to see Naimpin. He held out his hand, and then rather hesitatingly said: "*Kik-c-pau, ku kemnavan ra feranda?* 'my love to you' (that is, how do you do?), 'do you walk on the verandah?'" of course, meaning that, perhaps, she thought herself too much above him since she came to live with us.

In was in 1886, shortly before the arrival of the new missionaries, that a determined plot was made to take our lives. We thought that we had had the last of this kind of thing, and never dreamed of danger. It was at a feast at Unepang that the proposal was mooted; the heathen saw the rapid advance that Christianity was making; their power was slipping away, and they de-

terminated to make a last desperate effort. We heard nothing of all this; for, knowing how they had failed in their previous plots, all was kept very quiet. The plan was to kill my wife, our children and myself, and, as in the former plots, then all the teachers. One night, about ten o'clock, Mrs. Robertson was just going to bed in a room that is now our dining-room, and has two windows on each side of it. She had been some time in the room when she noticed that the blind on one of the windows was not properly drawn. Just as she went to pull it down, she saw, to her horror, a dark face peering up at her—the face of a man crouching just below on the outside. She said she was so taken aback and alarmed that she sprang right back to the centre of the room, and in a moment had called to me in as quiet and controlled a voice as she could manage. I was developing photographs in a room near, and, feeling sure my wife had seen a rat or something equally harmless, I laughed back to her. When, in another second or so, I heard her say, "There is a man under the window," it did not take me long to reach the room. He had disappeared from his hiding-place, and I was for going at once out, but my wife would not hear of it. Then I took the big dinner-bell, and, going to the door of my medicine-room, rang it very loudly. Immediately men came hurrying down; as they ran, they tied their bows to be in readiness, and all had some weapon, for they guessed that something serious had happened. Below the window of the room they found the *foot-prints of two men*, and the next day tracked these through our garden and the church grounds right down to the shore at Umpon-lu. There a canoe had evidently been lying, and had not long been taken away. Our people were furious, and the would-be murderers would have fared badly had they fallen into their hands that

night. All agreed that one pair of footsteps belonged to Novwai Namri, of Sufa. Some men were despatched to his village to find out about this. Novwai was nowhere to be seen, but a woman there, told our men that, with a friend, he had left Sufa the evening before in a canoe, saying that he was going to Unepang. We never found out who the second man was, probably he was a southerner, but we had no doubt that old Novwai Namri, who had professed the greatest friendliness for us, was the first, though nothing could be proved against him. They knew that I often worked at night, developing photographs, and that I might be opening the door to throw out water, and no doubt they laid their plans accordingly. When they saw the light in Mrs. Robertson's room, they probably slipped along there to see if that would be a handier place to enter. This was the last attempt ever made on Erromanga to take our lives. The "Martyr Isle," I think we may truly say, has been won for Christ, and though there are still a few scattered heathen, we trust and pray that they, too, may soon give their hearts to Him. Though during the last ten years or so there has not been the excitement and, perhaps, the cheer of the earlier years, the work is going on just the same, and though quiet, is, I believe, lasting. The steady upbuilding of our Erromangan Church, that is the duty that now lies before us and our people.

Meantime the work on the other islands has gone on apace. When our second *Dayspring* became too small and slow for the increasing wants of the Mission she was sold, and, in 1890, the Mission made arrangements for a steam service from Sydney, giving a stated sum to a Sydney Company to do the work. The steamer *Dayspring*, built by Messrs. Mackie and Thom-

son, of Govan on the Clyde—the money raised for the purpose being collected by Dr. Paton—did our work during part of 1896, but, being wrecked on a reef off New Caledonia in October of that year, it was decided at the meeting of Synod that we should give up the idea of having another steamer built to take her place.

The maritime work of the Mission is at present done by Messrs. Burns, Philp & Co., of Sydney, the s.s. *Mam-bare*, 1,218 tons, being the New Hebrides boat.

Some time ago I asked Mr. Wallis Tanner, then Island Manager for the Company, if he would give me a short account of the state of trade in the group, and he kindly sent the following figures, at the same time saying that "The information is only approximate; it is almost impossible to obtain figures that are perfectly reliable, but from my knowledge of the different estates and the amount of business which has been done through my Company, I think the figures given are as near as it is possible to obtain".

#### APPROXIMATE TOTALS FOR YEAR 1898.

##### IMPORTS.

General Merchandise—British	.	.	.	.	.	£12,000
" " French	.	.	.	.	.	6,000
Total						£18,000
Coal, 800 tons	.	.	.	.	.	£1,200
Timber	.	.	.	.	.	400

##### EXPORTS.

Bananas, 36,000 bunches	.	.	.	.	.	£600
Maize, 4,000 sacks	.	.	.	.	.	1,250
Copra, 2,000 tons	.	.	.	.	.	16,000
Coffee, 130 tons	.	.	.	.	.	6,000
Bêche-de-mer, 4 tons	.	.	.	.	.	400

The market price of nearly all exports during 1898 was considerably

lower than previous years ; the figures given are low approximates, rather than high.

Plantations, 36.—French companies hold the largest ; the value is hard to arrive at ; allowing 10 per cent. profit made during the year on the output, the value would be about £25,000 ; there are a number of expensive buildings on the property which would probably increase the value in the owners' estimation ; employees number 24 white, and 180 coloured.

F. Chevallard's plantation, valued at . . . .	£8,000
R. Stuart's plantation, valued at . . . .	10,500
Glissan and Wardlaw plantation, valued at . . . .	8,000
Roche Bros. plantation, valued at . . . .	8,000

The other thirty average about £1,000 each.

Total value of plantations, £89,500. Coloured labour employed in all about 600.

The French companies work coffee-cleaning machinery by kerosene engine, the other plantations by hand-gear.

The number of residents in the group, as compiled by F. Chevallard and myself, is: British 126, French 160, Foreign 42. Total 328.

#### VESSELS.

				Total Tonnage.
Steam—British, 1 . . . .	800 tons	Sailing—British, 7 . . . .	140 tons	
„ French, 1 . . . .	400 tons	„ French, 5 . . . .	139 tons	

British employ in all 20 men of white crew, 36 of black crew.

French employ in all 18 men of white crew, 36 of black crew.

During the year the British had on an average another steamer of 1,200 tons running, employing 18 white and 8 coloured crew.

The French also had a steamer of 900 tons, employing 14 white and 8 coloured crew.

Value of ships now running, £16,200.

The following are the approximate statistics for the year 1900:—

#### APPROXIMATE BRITISH AND FRENCH IMPORTS, EXPORTS, ETC., FOR THE YEAR 1900.

BRITISH.		FRENCH.	
<i>Imports—</i>		<i>Imports—</i>	
General Merchandise . . . .	£20,000	General Merchandise	} No statistics obtainable.
Coal, 500 tons, value . . . .	350	Coal	
Timber . . . . .	1,000	Timber	

BRITISH.		FRENCH.	
<i>Exports—</i>		<i>Exports—</i>	
Bananas, 10,000 bnchs., value about 9d. a bunch . . . .	£375	Bananas, 5,000 bnchs., value about 9d. a bunch . . . .	£187 10s.
Maize, 10,000 sacks, value about 8s. per sack . . . .	4,000	Maize, 5,000 sacks, value about 8s. per sack . . . .	£2,000
Copra, 1,500 tons, value, average £8 per ton .	12,000	Copra, 500 tons, value, average £8 per ton .	4,000
Coffee, 40 tons, value about £40 per ton .	1,600	Coffee, 120 tons, value about £40 per ton .	4,800
Sundry produce, about 50 tons, say . . .	1,000	Sundry produce . . .	?
<i>Population—</i>		<i>Population—</i>	
British residents <sup>1</sup> . .	176	French residents . .	297
<i>Vessels—</i>		<i>Vessels—</i>	
Steam, 2—tonnage 1,998 tons.		Steam, 2—tonnage 600 tons.	
Sailing, 9—tonnage 228 tons.		Sailing (over 10 tons), 2—tonnage 160 tons.	
Crews—steam, 42 whites, 26 blacks; sailing, 18 whites, 40 blacks.		Crews—steam, 12 whites, 40 blacks; sailing, 3 whites, 20 blacks.	

So far as to the statistics of the trade of the New Hebrides.

In conclusion, I have to thank Bishop Wilson, of the Melanesian Mission, for the following interesting account of their work in the New Hebrides; for three of the northern islands are worked by the English Church missionaries.

"The Melanesian Mission was founded in 1849 by Bishop Selwyn, of New Zealand. His scheme of work was to raise up gradually a band of native teachers, who should be the missionaries to their people. For this purpose a mission school was founded near Auckland, and afterwards, in order to be nearer the islands, at Norfolk Island, and here boys and girls were brought from the New Hebrides, Banks, Torres, Santa Cruz and

<sup>1</sup> This number includes all foreign nationalities except the French.



Solomon Islands, and kept and taught for eight or nine years, when they returned to their own islands or those of others. The story of Patteson is well known. From 1855 to 1871, he went in and out amongst the islands, laying down his life in the Santa Cruz group in 1871.

"The death of the Bishop in the early days of the Mission was a blow from which, for the time, it reeled. The natives were ready to believe that work would now cease. However, George Sarawia and other native teachers went about reassuring the people, saying, "This is the work of God, and therefore it cannot fail". There were barely four hundred native Christians when Patteson died in 1871. There are now 13,000, and many more heathen, who are touched by Christianity and are attending the schools and services of the Church, and are following to some extent the teachings of Christ.

"John Richardson Selwyn, the son of the first Bishop, succeeded Patteson in 1877, and retired owing to sickness and lameness in 1891. In his time, the Nukapa and Santa Cruz natives were visited and made friends with. Schools were established in Santa Cruz and the Torres Islands, and Florida, one of the worst of the head-hunting islands of the Solomon group, was won to Christianity. In this last island there are now 5,000 Christians. Mr. Woodford, the Deputy Commissioner for the Solomons, has taken up his residence there, and the island is likely to become a centre of civilisation and focus of light for the Solomons. A central training school was established at Siotu in 1895. Here Dr. Welchman has a dispensary, and at an early date will also have an hospital. The Rev. R. B. Comins or Dr. Welchman is in constant residence at this centre. The other Mission stations are visited by the white clergy during six or seven months of the year, and are then left to the native clergy and teachers in the hope that

thus a native church, independent of ourselves, will be built up.

"The Banks group (nine islands) is perhaps the scene of the Mission's greatest success, but since 1891 a change has come over the three New Hebrides Islands (Aurora, Lepers' Island and Pentecost) which the Mission works. Patteson found the people less inclined to receive the new teaching than the Banks Islanders. Until 1891 progress was slow, but each year now sees new villages accepting the 'teaching' and begging for teachers. There are now twenty-six schools and sixty teachers in Pentecost; nineteen schools and thirty-four teachers on Lepers' Island; and nine schools and twenty-eight teachers on Aurora. Of an estimated population of 13,000 in these three islands, 2,000 are attending schools.

"Yours very truly,

"CECIL WILSON,

"*Bishop of Melanesia.*"

Our own Presbyterian Mission has, on Ambrim, a well-built hospital for the accommodation of both white and black patients. This was commenced in 1893 by Dr. Lamb, the missionary of the New Zealand Church, and, since his retirement in ill-health in 1898, Dr. John T. Bowie has had the superintendence of the work. The hospital has been a great boon to many already, and we feel sure will be even more so in the future.

The Training Institute for the instruction of native teachers was opened on the 18th March, 1895, with seven pupils. The Rev. J. Annand, M.A., D.D., the missionary of our Canadian Church, is the Principal. In 1898, the number of students had risen to sixty-three. They stay four years and are then sent back to their missionaries to do work on their own islands or others. To-day we have twenty-five European missionaries,

occupying nearly all the islands between Aneityum south and Santo north, and from ten to twelve European assistants, two native pastors, about four hundred native teachers, and, perhaps, three thousand Church members. Portions of Scripture have been translated and printed in all the different languages, while the complete New Testament has been printed in Efatése, Aniwan, and one dialect of Tanna, and the entire Bible in Aneityumese. By means of missionary effort life and property are comparatively safe over the whole group. Eight branches of the Presbyterian Church are represented in the Mission, and the work done by all their missionaries is a faithful and lasting one.

In view of all this extension, this rapid and encouraging success of our Mission, the Churches have every reason to go forward with redoubled energy and to press on with earnest and constant prayer to God for His blessing, till all shall receive the truth in the love of it.

As Churches and as a Mission, as well as individual missionaries, we shall meet with difficulties and disappointments. But success is already assured, and we cannot—dare not—doubt the final success. "They that go forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless return *bringing their sheaves with them.*" "*As truly as I live, the whole earth shall be filled with the glory of God.*"

In the strength of God, let us therefore go forward doing our duty faithfully, not only here but wherever He has called us to work, so that we may soon see the kingdoms of this world become *the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.*

## NOTES TO THE CHAPTERS.

☞ These notes are intended to explain some things in the text which could not well be explained there without interrupting the narrative. As the same thing is sometimes mentioned in different chapters, I have repeated the reference wherever it is necessary to do so.

J. F.

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### CHAPTER I.

<sup>1</sup> *Numpun-Norowo* : " the head of Norowo " ; *Numpun-Neraipau*, " the head of Neraipau ".

<sup>2</sup> *Lo-itnateman* : " the kingdom of men ".

<sup>3</sup> In a bamboo.—In India and other tropical countries, where it grows to a great height and some thickness, the bamboo is put to many useful purposes when cut down. As it is one of the *Grasses*, its stalk grows in jointed sections and is hollow throughout, except at the joints. If one of these sections is sawn through and the joint left at one end of it, the section becomes a long but narrow water bucket ; if the piece sawn off contains three or four sections and the inside portion of the upper joints is punched out, the bucket will hold a considerable quantity of water ; if all the joints are punched out, the bamboo becomes a water-pipe.

<sup>4</sup> Their behaviour.—As appears further on, they regarded him as a god or spirit-being come to visit them. Such a belief is common among the dark races on their first contact with white men. The Sāmoans still call all foreigners *papālangi*, which is said to mean " bursting through the sky ".

### CHAPTER II.

<sup>1</sup> Yellow men.—Rotumah is a small island to the north of the Fiji group. The natives are not exactly " yellow " men, for they belong to the brown Polynesian stock ; but native languages in their rude stage do not often distinguish the grades of colour.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. Dr. Steel.—See note 14, chap. iv., and note 6, chap. v.

<sup>3</sup> *Navilah*.—These are stones, large and small, of peculiar shape or

origin, in which some supernatural power is supposed to reside because of their connection with a spirit or spirits; the Samoans would call them "mana" stones. Our natives of Australia carry small stones of that kind on their persons to protect them from evil.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. Dr. Turner.—That was the Rev. George Turner, LL.D. (author of *Samoa a Hundred Years Ago*, etc.), who laboured so long as a missionary in the South Seas.

<sup>5</sup> Weather-boarded houses.—See note 3, chap. xvi.

<sup>6</sup> Trial and danger.—For a full account of this time of peril, refer to Dr. Paton's *Autobiography*, vol. i., chap. x., of sixth edition.

<sup>7</sup> Loyalty Group.—A dependency of the French colony of New Caledonia. See map of the South-West Pacific.

<sup>8</sup> Red ochre.—Among our Australian tribes that is in great request for the decoration of the bodies of the men on public occasions, such as the *karabari* or native dance, which, however, is of a semi-religious nature. Wherever a deposit of that earth is known to exist, a tribe will send messengers to it for hundreds of miles, even through hostile territory, to get a supply.

<sup>9</sup> Lifu is one of the islands of the Loyalty group, on the east coast of New Caledonia, and Sandwich Island is Efaté of the New Hebrides.

<sup>10</sup> The people of Santo are much milder in their disposition than those of the southern New Hebrides; but often the attitude of native tribes everywhere towards white visitors is influenced by the kind of experience they had of the white men who first came to them.

<sup>11</sup> The brown Polynesians are the inhabitants of all the islands in the Pacific eastwards from Fiji. They are often called Malays, but they are in no respect Malays.

<sup>12</sup> "Mothers."—Uncivilised tribes and nations have not specialised their words of relationship. A man calls his mother's sister his *mother*, but the one who gave him birth is his '*own mother*'. So also an uncle is called *father*.

<sup>13</sup> "Property."—See note 5, chap. iv.

<sup>14</sup> *Dayspring*.—See note 1, chap. v.

<sup>15</sup> "Misi"—so much used in the New Hebrides—was originally a contraction for "missionary," and was addressed by the natives to him only. It is generally used in that way still, but when they find some other Englishman's name hard for them to pronounce, they say Misi to him, only however when he is a man whom they honour and respect; if they do not, they call him merely "white man". Hence "Misi" is sometimes used now for our Mr., and "Misis" for Mrs.

<sup>16</sup> "Fair complexion."—From his Polynesian blood.

<sup>17</sup> "Labour men."—See note 7, chap. xiii.

## CHAPTER III.

<sup>1</sup> "Teachers."—See note 6, chap. iv.

<sup>2</sup> *Camden*.—See note 2, chap. iv.

<sup>3</sup> Shell.—This is the great conch shell used as a trumpet for alarm and for war.

<sup>4</sup> "Feast."—These feasts of heathen lands are essentially religious, and had their origin in connection with sacrifice. I am of opinion that cannibalism originated among those peoples that offered human sacrifices; the worshippers *partake* of the thing offered. An *annual feast*, such as the one referred to in this chapter and place, is usually in honour of some *great god*. The Australian tribes held one such for Ba-ye-mai, their great creator-god.

In Erromanga, these sacred feasts are called *nisekar*, and are often mentioned in the succeeding chapters of this volume.

<sup>5</sup> "The Bush."—A colonial phrase to mean all the timbered parts of the country, not yet cleared.

<sup>6</sup> "They have nothing"; that is, "they are unarmed"; *nindevavu* means "of no account," "only children".

<sup>7</sup> *Nobā* is "a god"—one of the great spirits whom the natives reverence or fear.

<sup>8</sup> They called in "only".—This is a native expression to mean that they had come in "merely" as visitors to look around, with no intention to do wrong.

<sup>9</sup> "Isle of Pines."—At the south end of New Caledonia.

<sup>10</sup> "Mulua."—A missionary station of the L. M. Society in Samoa where there is a college for the training of native teachers.

<sup>11</sup> "Maré and Lifu."—Of the Loyalty Islands. See note 9, chap. ii.

## CHAPTER IV.

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. James Bayne, afterwards Dr. Bayne, was at this time Convener of the Foreign Missions Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, and continued to be so till his death about the year 1875.

<sup>2</sup> *John Williams*.—The London Missionary Society has now had four vessels, each bearing the name of *John Williams*, and employed in visiting their many stations on the islands of the South Seas, and conveying missionaries and stores. The first *John Williams* was the brig *Camden*, which took Messrs. Williams and Harris to Erromanga. In memory of them, she was afterwards called the *John Williams*. She was wrecked on the reef at Niné or Savage Island in 1864, as stated in this volume, and her successor on the same reef in 1866. A new vessel was then built, and when she too was wrecked, the present *John Williams* was built,

but with "auxiliary steam," to avoid the risks and dangers experienced in the past.

<sup>3</sup> Geddie and Inglis. See chap. v.

<sup>4</sup> *John Knox*.—Until a year or two ago, the Mission Synod of the New Hebrides has been obliged to maintain a mission vessel to bring supplies of various kinds from Sydney to the mission stations on the various islands, to carry missionaries and teachers to the islands or stations to which they were appointed, to bring the missionaries from these stations to the place of the Annual Meeting of the Synod, and to carry them back to their homes when the Meeting was over, besides other incidental services which a large work on such a group of islands always imposes. In the early times the mission vessel came to Sydney *once a year*, and carried back stores and the post-office mails to the missionaries *once a year*. Occasionally, an opportunity might occur of sending the mails by a stray trading vessel or by one of H.M.'s ships of war; but these means were always uncertain. At the present day, the development of the islands solely *through the work of the mission* is such that a steamship company of Sydney sends a steamer of over 1,000 tons every second month to the islands of the New Hebrides, and the trade of these islands is increasing so rapidly that the company purposes shortly to lay on a steamer every month. That is entirely a commercial enterprise, and the business men in Sydney who are making gain in this way have Christian missions to thank for these gains; for the Christianising of the natives has made trade possible and safe.

The very first mission craft was a big boat of only a few tons; her name was the *Columbia*. The next, called the *John Knox*, was built in Scotland for the mission, and brought to Sydney *on the deck* of a sailing ship. From Sydney a sailor of the *John Williams'* crew took her to Aneityum. She was about twelve tons burden. The first *Dayspring* was 115 tons, the second was 160 tons, and the third was the steamer lost off New Caledonia in 1894.

<sup>5</sup> In the Samoan islands, *tonga*, "native property," included mats, native cloths, hooks and lines for fishing, shells, etc.—everything that a native looks on as his personal "belongings". That is the meaning of the word "property" in this passage.

<sup>6</sup> "Eastern teachers."—These were Samoans and others from Eastern Polynesia, who, as the fruits of mission labour there, often volunteered to carry the Gospel to heathen islands in Oceania.

<sup>7</sup> "Sacred men."—These are the sorcerers or wizards—so well known among the Australians and everywhere among the black races—who bring evil upon men by the aid of the spirits. See chap. xix.

<sup>8</sup> Santa Cruz is an island and group to the north of the New Hebrides.

<sup>9</sup> Captain Hedley Vicars.—See *Memorials of Captain Hedley Vicars*, by the author of the *Victory Won*. London: Jas. Nisbet & Co., 1859.

<sup>10</sup> "Its inroads."—In practice, the heathen, especially those of the black race, are fatalists; to them, any virulent disease comes from the malevolence of some god or spirit, and it is useless to strive against it.

<sup>11</sup> "Broken up—Mrs. Paton—flight."—For a full account of all these painful events, see the *Autobiography of Dr. John G. Paton, Missionary to the New Hebrides*, vol. i., chap. x. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1890.

<sup>12</sup> Mr. Copeland.—See note 4, chap. xi.

<sup>13</sup> "Joe and Mana" were two Erromangans who, when heathen lads, had been taken by the *John Williams* to Samoa some years before this time. In Samoa they had come under the influence of the Gospel, and, on their return to the New Hebrides, Dr. Geddie baptised them as the "first-fruits" of Erromanga.

<sup>14</sup> See *The New Hebrides and Christian Missions*, by Rev. Robt. Steel, Ph.D. London, 1880. Dr. Steel was the well-known minister of St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church, Sydney.

## CHAPTER V.

<sup>1</sup> The first *Dayspring* left Halifax (Nova Scotia) on 7th Nov., 1863, for the New Hebrides, calling at the Cape of Good Hope, Melbourne, Geelong, and then on to Sydney. She was built in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, by Mr. J. W. Carmichael, and cost about £3,000. See also *Rev. Dr. Paton's Autobiography* (London: Hodder & Stoughton), mentioned in note 11, chap. iv.

<sup>2</sup> William A. Fraser was a Nova-Scotian, and from its famous county of Pictou, which has given Sir William Dawson and Principal George Monro Grant to science and education, and such men as Geddie, Matheson, Grant, Murray, Morton, Mackenzie and Robertson to the foreign mission field. Grant and Morton went to Trinidad.

<sup>3</sup> "The children's ship."—For the way in which the children were led to an interest in this missionary ship, see Dr. Paton's *Autobiography*, vol. ii., as above.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Morgan was his name. The ship's flag bore on it *the dove* as the symbol of the mission. Captain Williams came after Captain Morgan, and Captain Turpie after him.

<sup>5</sup> *Lava-lava* is the loin-cloth of the men; the name is Samoan, and was brought to the southern islands of the New Hebrides by the "Eastern teachers," mentioned in note 6, chap. iv. The native Erromangan name for it is *neto-etingi*.

<sup>6</sup> Rev. Dr. Steel (see note 14, chap. iv.) had at that time no connection with the New Hebrides Mission, but was a warm friend of foreign missions and of all Christian movements for good. When the Presbyterian Churches in New South Wales became united, he was for many



years a useful member of the *Dayspring* Board in Sydney, and acted as agent for the mission.

<sup>7</sup> "Storm-rigging."—Houses in these islands are covered with thatch of sugar-cane leaf. When the hurricane season of the year is approaching, it is necessary to have the thatch held down by heavy poles of timber laid along above it and securely fastened down.

<sup>8</sup> Lazarus was a mission teacher on Aneityum and himself a native of the island.

#### CHAPTER VI.

<sup>1</sup> "Collect money."—See *Dr. Paton's Autobiography*, chap. III., vol. II., mentioned in note II, chap. iv.

<sup>2</sup> "Sunday Schools."—All that is narrated fully in *Dr. Paton's* book, vol. II.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. James Chalmers.—This devoted missionary to the Papuans lost his life in the beginning of last year, while visiting for the first time the tribes on one of the rivers in the west of British New Guinea.

<sup>4</sup> The Rev. William McIntyre, M.A., came originally from the Western Highlands of Scotland, and was settled as minister of the Presbyterian Congregation at West Maitland, New South Wales, about the year 1842, where he laboured for over twenty years. He was then translated to St. George's Church, Sydney. He was well-known for his high character and the liberal use he made of his wealth.

<sup>5</sup> "Kirk."—The Presbyterian Churches in Canada were at that date not yet united.

<sup>6</sup> Lathella's ploughing cattle were given to him by Dr. Geddie's family, when the beasts were quite young.

<sup>7</sup> *Taro* is the *arum esculentum* of botanists, the *colocasia antiquorum*, and may be regarded, in some of its varieties, as the best article of native food throughout the South Sea Islands. It is cooked in the native ovens which are small pits made in the ground.

#### CHAPTER VII.

<sup>1</sup> "Sacred men."—See note 7, chap. iv.

<sup>2</sup> "High chief."—As in Samoa, so also in some islands of the New Hebrides, there are chiefs and high chiefs; the latter are considered men of exalted dignity and cannot be easily approached direct. In Samoa there is "chief's" language; that is, certain words which are good enough in ordinary conversation must not be used when you are speaking to a chief: etiquette requires you to substitute certain other words for them; and to a high chief still another set of words must be used for common things.

<sup>3</sup> Yomot.—See his history in chap. xvii.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Turner.—See note 4, chap. ii.

<sup>5</sup> "Father."—In some of the New Hebrides islands, an uncle is addressed as "father". So also among the Australian tribes. In the islands, a child makes a distinction between his "mother" (uncle's wife) and "his own mother," who gave him birth. See note 12, chap. ii.

<sup>6</sup> These Santoans are the only people in the New Hebrides who make pottery. Quiros found them making it in A.D. 1606.

<sup>7</sup> "Image of the moon."—In Australia the chief of a tribe in the settled districts used to wear on his breast a brass plate shaped in the form of a crescent moon, given to him by the colonists as a sign of his rank.

### CHAPTER VIII.

<sup>1</sup> The "*siman-lō*" is a long and lofty erection shaped like the frame of a covered waggon, in which cooking is done and feasts are held. It is sometimes also the sleeping place of the young men at night—their barracks or bachelors' hall; but the proper sleeping houses for them are ridge-roofed, on upright walls. For the *siman-lō*, see illustration.

<sup>2</sup> "Ifwa."—This incident is a signal proof that a simple act of kindness done to a savage is not forgotten. Many of the atrocities done by savages are only acts of retaliation for injuries previously received.

<sup>3</sup> "Pundit."—See note 7, chap. xvi.

<sup>4</sup> "Bamboo bottles."—See note 3, chap. i.

<sup>5</sup> "Rocky paths."—The distance is over twenty-five miles. See map of Erromanga, *Robertson's Road*.

<sup>6</sup> "My pocket Bible."—See the *Autobiography*, chap. x., vol. i., as above.

<sup>7</sup> "Misi."—See note 14, chap. ii.

<sup>8</sup> Yomot.—See his life in chap. xvii.

<sup>9</sup> *Yarra-Yarra*.—This was a strong whale-boat of great use to the Erromangan Mission.

<sup>10</sup> "My own brother."—See note 12, chap. ii.

<sup>11</sup> "Feast."—See note 4, chap. iii.

<sup>12</sup> "Shoot them."—Yomot was an excellent shot with the fowling-piece and the rifle. See this fact in his life, chap. xvii.

<sup>13</sup> "Branch shining with light."—It is a phosphorescent fungus that gives the light. On dark, damp nights these lights shine like fire, and the natives pick up bits of old wood covered with this fungus and thereby light themselves along the narrow and often dangerous paths. If the night is dark but dry, they generally take dry reeds or cocoanut branches, tie them up in bundles and use them as torches. When lighted, these turn the darkness into a very day for brightness, "and when scores of natives are marching along in single file on a bush track, and every fifth man or so is carrying one of these brilliant flares of flame, the sight is

very pleasing to the onlooker and often very fantastic". These fungus lights sometimes frighten the natives; they then think them to be ghosts

<sup>14</sup> *Ovetele Unepang*.—"Men (of) Unepang."

#### CHAPTER IX.

<sup>1</sup> The *Dayspring* was now going north to collect the missionaries and bring them to Aneityum for the Annual Meeting, which was to be held there that year. See note 4, chap. iv.

#### CHAPTER X.

<sup>1</sup> Labour vessel.—See note 7, chap. xiii.

<sup>2</sup> "Six pounds."—This is the usual amount of wages *in money* given to a servant or native teacher on the islands.

<sup>3</sup> "With his toes."—I have seen an Australian black lift a straw with his toes and thus convey it to his hand. So also he can pick up a small spear or other article. This accomplishment is useful in war.

#### CHAPTER XI.

<sup>1</sup> "Misi" is for "missionary" as already explained. It is now sometimes used for Mr. as a mark of respect.

<sup>2</sup> "In danger" from the operation of the law of revenge—the *lex talionis*: "an eye for an eye". In heathenism, when a man has been killed by foul means, his son or avengers seek out and kill the slayer or at least some one of the relatives—as satisfaction for the deed of blood. If that cannot be done, it is enough to kill some one of the tribe to which the slayer belongs. White men were supposed to be members all of the same tribe. Hence in the early history of our natives, when a white man had at any time caused the death of a black, or done any serious injury, the natives took revenge on the next white man that came that way. This principle explains many instances of savage hostility on the approach of white men.

<sup>3</sup> "Ipare" or Ipat seems to be the real native name for the island of Tanna; for *tanna* or *tana* only means "land".

<sup>4</sup> Mr. and Mrs. Paton, the missionaries on the little island of Aniwa, to the east of Tanna; Mr. Paton is the well-known Dr. J. G. Paton. Rev. Joseph Copeland was for many years missionary on the little island of Futuna near Aniwa; the other is the late Rev. Dr. Steel, of St. Stephen's Church, Sydney (see a previous note).

<sup>5</sup> The late Rev. Wm. Wyatt Gill, B.A., LL.D., was for thirty-three years a missionary of the London Missionary Society—chiefly at Mangaia in the Hervey group of the South Seas. He was the author of *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, *Life in the Southern Isles*, and several other books.

<sup>6</sup>This Memorial Church is shown in one of the illustrations to this volume. It was blown down by the great hurricane of the 22nd of January of the year 1901.

<sup>7</sup>"I saw Mr. Gordon."—Our natives believe that a man has two spirits, the one of which dies with his death, but the other lives on. This spirit can leave the body for a time during life in dreams or in a trance, and visit persons and things in the unseen world. If it stays too long away or cannot find the way back, its owner dies.

<sup>8</sup>"Charms and sacred stones."—These are of the same kind as the "grecgrees" of the African. They are used in the rites of sorcery and for protection against witchcraft.

## CHAPTER XII.

<sup>1</sup>"A sacred man," that is, a sorcerer, a "medicine man".

<sup>2</sup>"Shouting."—The natives seem to be unable to get on without this. Sometimes, when twenty or thirty of them are carrying a big log, a chief will seat himself aloft on it, and, by his example, help them to shout well and in good time.

<sup>3</sup>"Taro"; this is the *arum esculentum* so commonly used as a prime article of diet in the South Sea Islands. Some places produce a better quality of it than others. Taro and yams are tuberous food-roots like pumpkins or potatoes, and are cooked by baking, or rather steaming, in the native oven, which oven is a big round hole dug in the ground having its bottom lined with hard stones. These are made hot by kindling billetwood on the top of them. When they are sufficiently hot, the ashes are raked off. A layer of damp grass is laid on the stones, and on that the food to be cooked; even a whole pig can be cooked at once. Then above that another layer of grass or leaves is placed, and on it some more food, and so on till the oven is filled. It is then covered all over with earth and ashes, and left so for some hours. When the cook cries "the oven is uncovered," that is an intimation to all that the *dinner* is ready.

<sup>4</sup>"Native puddings" are not like those on our tables. They are very palatable concoctions of pieces of taro with grated kernel of cocoanut or the like, and are put in strong leaves and baked in the native oven. See chap. xix.

<sup>5</sup>"Fan" is an epithet of anything choice and good.

<sup>6</sup>"Another wife sent him."—A great man gets a present of a woman from one who admires him, as a mark of honour and respect.

<sup>7</sup>"Remain only."—See a previous note for the native use of this word *only*. The "only" is sometimes equivalent to "alone".

## CHAPTER XIII.

<sup>1</sup> "Pigs, fowls, fish, taro, yams."—These, with bread-fruit and bananas, are the staple articles of food in the Melanesian and Polynesian regions. For "taro and yams," see note 3, chap. xii.

<sup>2</sup> "*Siman-lo*."—The cook-house ; see a previous note.

<sup>3</sup> The *nam*, that is, "the word," the word of the Gospel, Christianity. The brown Polynesians call it the *lotu*, "the religion".

<sup>4</sup> and <sup>5</sup> *Tampoli* is "native cabbage," and *daw* is "banana leaves".

<sup>6</sup> "Mrs. Lawrie."—The wife of one of the missionaries then on the group. Mr. Lawrie is now minister of a Presbyterian Church in Sydney.

<sup>7</sup> "The labour-vessel."—The growing of the sugar-cane is a valuable industry in Fiji and Queensland, the tropical climate there being favourable to its growth and to the making of sugar. But white men do not bear well the necessary work in the cane fields in the hot sun, or at least do not seem to care to undertake the work ; hence it is done mostly by coolies from India and kanakas from Melanesia and Polynesia. Kanaka, or tangata, is a Polynesian word for "a man" or "men". The demand for kanakas to work in the sugar plantations for wages led some ship-owners to employ their vessels in getting labourers from the New Hebrides and other groups in the Pacific and carrying them to Queensland to be hired. The State of Queensland has now a very stringent law to regulate this traffic, but twenty years ago, and until that humane law was enacted, these "labour-vessels" were, many of them, "black-birders," that is, they caught and trapped black men, and sometimes women, wherever they could find them. The cruelties and murders perpetrated on many of the islands by this trade are still sad memories to the natives. It is said that even now labour men, ingenious in deceiving, can succeed in evading the law. But the recent legislation of the Australian Commonwealth is likely to abolish kanaka labour in a few years.

<sup>8</sup> "Misi is here".—A quiet testimony to the effects of Christian Missions.

<sup>9</sup> *Nate, nate*, means "father, father"—a call for help.

<sup>10</sup> "To the native mind."—See note 2, chap. xi.

## CHAPTER XIV.

<sup>1</sup> "Sleep."—The blacks of Australia throw off any clothing they may have and sleep thus around the camp fire.

<sup>2</sup> The *Dayspring* in those days used to come to Sydney in the end of the year, and lie in the harbour at anchor, and leave again in April after the hurricane season at the islands was over.

<sup>1</sup> "Six months."—The usual length of time between the departure of the mission vessel and her return.

<sup>2</sup> "Arrow-root bulba."—The missionaries have encouraged the natives to cultivate the arrow-root plant, and to grate down the bulbs and prepare the product for market by washing it to the requisite whiteness. The flour is then packed in casks and sent to Australia and Britain for sale. In this way the native Christians have contributed many hundreds of pounds sterling for the printing of the Scriptures in their own languages.

<sup>3</sup> "Perfect gentleman."—Many natives of Australia, Melanisia and Polynesia are thorough gentlemen in their bearing and demeanour. They have dignity, courtesy, and perfect self-possession.

<sup>4</sup> *Siman-to*.—The cooking-house; see previous notes.

<sup>5</sup> *Nisekar*.—These were the religious feasts of the heathen people here. "The people sat down to *eat and drink* and rose up to play."

<sup>6</sup> "Bamboo."—See note 3, chap. i.

<sup>7</sup> "He was afraid."—The experience of Dr. Livingstone in Africa and of travellers in other black countries shows how frightsome to the natives at first is the appearance of a white man. The blacks seem to regard him as a malevolent resurrected ghost who has influence with the spirit-powers who work for evil to men.

<sup>8</sup> "His pay."—Such a cruel trick as that could not be done now unchallenged, if the kanaka were able to make complaint in the proper quarter. The pay to such a black labourer in Queensland is from six to twelve pounds *per annum* with his keep; and at the close of his engagement, three or five years, he is sent back to his own island with a comfortable sum of money in his pocket.

<sup>9</sup> "The oven was opened."—See note 3, chap. xii.

<sup>10</sup> "Her late husband."—The law among the Australian blacks is that the widow becomes the property of his next brother or nearest male relative.

<sup>11</sup> "Sisters to give you."—A common way of barter for marriage.

<sup>12</sup> "Deep down."—Anger and other passions—mild as well as fierce ones—were supposed to have their seat in the belly; hence the origin of such words as the Latin *stomachari*.

<sup>13</sup> "Remain only."—That is, to continue as he was. For the Erromangan use of this expression, see note 8, chap. iii., and note 7, chap. xii.

## CHAPTER XV.

<sup>1</sup> "Indifferently."—In Australia this coldness of demeanour is part of the native etiquette. When a boy returns to his parents' home after a long absence, he sits down at some distance and looks around him apparently without concern; then, after perhaps ten minutes of this, he rises up and rushes into their arms with loud emotion on their part and his,

<sup>2</sup> "Mr. James Anderson" was an Aberdonian by birth, and well known to all Presbyterians in Sydney for his own fine character and his connection with St. Stephen's Church. He was an office-bearer there for the long period of forty years (Deacon, 1858-62; thereafter Elder). He died in August, 1898. He and his wife always showed a lively interest in the New Hebrides Mission and the missionaries.

<sup>3</sup> "A feast."—A *nisekar*. See note 7, chap. xiv., and note 4, chap. iii.

<sup>4</sup> *Siman-lō*.—The cooking-house. See note 1, chap. viii.

#### CHAPTER XVI.

<sup>1</sup> and <sup>2</sup> "Dr. Steel and Dr. Gill."—See previous notes 4 and 5, chap. xi.

<sup>3</sup> "Weather-boarded."—Here and further on in this chapter occur several expressions which are in common use in this part of the world, but may not be intelligible elsewhere without some explanation: (1) "Weather-boarded" house.—Such a house has its frame-work of timber studding. Then flooring boards are sawn in the mill diagonally along their length, so as to have a thick edge below and a very thin edge above. These are nailed on the studs outside in horizontal tiers, the thick edge of the tier higher up overlapping a little the thin edge of the tier below to keep out the weather. That is called *weather-boarding*. (2) "Blue gum."—That is one of the best varieties of the well-known Australian *eucalyptus* tree. They are all called *gum* trees from their exudation of a resinous gum, and *blue*, *white*, *spotted*, etc., from the colour of their bark. (3) "To gammon" is to talk with exaggerations, to feign, to make pretences with the intention of deceiving others.

<sup>4</sup> "A sham fight."—Among the Australian tribes, the *Bora* ceremonies, which are part of their religion, close with a sham fight in which the newly initiated young men take part.

<sup>5</sup> "Memorial Church."—With this compare the church built in the compound at Cawnpore, and similar memorials elsewhere.

<sup>6</sup> "Is."—Alas! we must now say *was*; for the Church was wrecked by the hurricane of January, 1901.

<sup>7</sup> *Pundit*.—Throughout the islands of the South Seas, a native well skilled in his own language, who helps the missionaries in translations and otherwise, is called a *pundit* by them.

<sup>8</sup> "In Queensland."—He had gone as a kanaka or coloured labourer to work in the sugar plantations in Queensland. See note 7, chap. xiii.

<sup>9</sup> "No gammon."—See note 3, above.

<sup>10</sup> "Broke their word."—A native expression for disobedience.

#### CHAPTER XVII.

<sup>1</sup> "His swag."—This colonial expression means the rolled-up blanket—sometimes called, in Australia, his "bluey"—and a few other things,

which a "tramp" carries with him in the "bush" when he is in search of work.

<sup>2</sup> "To Fiji."—That is, to work in the sugar plantations there.

<sup>3</sup> "To take the word."—That is, to become Christians. The Samoans call it *lotu*, "the worship," but *loto*, "the heart," as the seat of the affections, seems to be a different word.

<sup>4</sup> "Cry."—That is the *wail for the dead*. It is the *tangi* of the Samoans; the *conclamatio* of the Romans; the *keening* of the Irish; the "minstrels and people making a noise" of Matthew ix. 23; "them that wept and wailed greatly" of Mark v. 38.

#### CHAPTER XVIII.

<sup>1</sup> "Sacred stones."—See note 8, chap. xi. "Flying-fox" is the colonial name for a large fruit-eating *bat*. Its head resembles a fox's on a small scale.

<sup>2</sup> "Men on horseback."—Aboriginal art in Australia makes similar essays, often grotesque.

<sup>3</sup> "Aniwa (i = ee) and Futúna."—The language and population of these two islands are of the brown Polynesian variety—of the same race as the Samoans and Maories.

#### CHAPTER XIX.

<sup>1</sup> *Navilah*.—A few years ago, in the interests of science, an Australian coral-boring expedition went from Sydney to Funa-futi, a small atoll island to the north of Fiji. One day a native produced a small iron wheel which had been left there some time before. From its shape and qualities, he had come to think there was "*mana*" or supernatural power in it, and so had buried it in the ground at the roots of a cocoanut tree to give fertility. Any stone of peculiar shape or properties the Polynesians easily regard as having *mana*.

Some of the Erromangan *navilah* stones are quite circular and like a ring or wheel. Such also were some of the symbols of Baal and Astoreth, the deities of productiveness, the Sun and the Moon, in the ancient Syrian world. A sacredness also belonged to the "ring-stones" found in Celtic lands, and the circular aperture in them had sacred uses.

<sup>2</sup> "Crawl."—The Celtic ring-stones were used in that way.

<sup>3</sup> "Wail."—This is the death-wail. See note 4, chap. xvii.

<sup>4</sup> "Boys."—The *kava* drink must have in its origin been connected with the worship of the gods. Various facts about it suggest this. In Samoa, long ago, only young virgins were allowed to do the preparatory chewing of the rootlets.

<sup>5</sup> "Naming."—The plurality of wives is answerable for the perplexities of "mother-right" and "father-right" in the Australian tribes, and the naming of children in the New Hebrides.



<sup>6</sup> "Planks."—Surf-swimming is a loved pastime of boys and girls in all the South Sea Islands. Where there is a coral reef, they go out on it and sport there for hours like young seals.

<sup>7</sup> "Mourners."—See note 4, chap. xvii.

<sup>8</sup> "Funeral feast."—With this compare the funeral games and feasts of the ancient Greeks and Romans.

<sup>9</sup> Food, hair, etc.—These are a universal medium of sorcery in Australia, New Guinea and elsewhere among the black races.

<sup>10</sup> "Plural."—The plural of majesty is a figure which was not invented by civilised races. In Samoa, even when a chief is travelling alone, you address him in the dual: Where are you (two) going? for a *chief* is supposed to be always accompanied by a henchman or an attendant.

<sup>11</sup> "Red, white," etc.—In Scotland, especially in the fisher villages, occupied by only a few families, such additions to the name and surname are very common and necessary.

#### CHAPTER XX.

<sup>1</sup> "Our visit."—As the climate of the islands seriously affects the health of many Europeans, missionaries get one year's furlough for every ten years' residence.

<sup>2</sup> "Tobogganing."—To those who have not seen a Canadian winter and its sports, it will be impossible to convey by words a sense of the pleasure and excitement which lie in the use of the *toboggan*.

<sup>3</sup> "Mr. and Mrs. Anderson."—See a previous note about them.

<sup>4</sup> "Labour traffic."—See a previous note about it.

<sup>5</sup> "Visit to Canada."—See note 1, above.

<sup>6</sup> "Tangoa" is a small island in the north New Hebrides, but another, called Tongoa, is further south.

## APPENDIX

### I. THE NATURAL FEATURES OF THE NEW HEBRIDES.

By ALEXR. MORRISON, Esq., LL.D., Government Botanist,  
Perth, Western Australia.

DEAR MR. ROBERTSON,

The task you have entrusted to me, to give an account of some of the natural features of Erromanga and of the islands of the New Hebrides in general, is one for which I am very poorly qualified, either by extent of knowledge or practical experience on the islands; but I am somewhat re-assured by the consideration that that particular group of islands has not as yet been very fully described, and that a statement of some of the facts observed during a trip made in the winter of 1896 may stimulate those who are interested in these islands to acquire a better understanding of their natural features.

The New Hebrides are situated, roughly speaking, between the 15th° and 20th° of south latitude, corresponding in that respect with the coast of North Queensland, from which they are separated by some 20° of longitude. Being within the tropics, therefore, and in the midst of the Pacific Ocean, they are subject to the trade winds, and their climate is warm and humid, with a wet summer and a dry winter, the latter season being tolerably cool on the more southerly islands of the group.

The islands, from a geological point of view, are composed of coral and volcanic rocks, in most instances mixed up together, but with the former apparently predominating in extent. In sailing round the group, we are struck with a certain difference between the aspect of the islands as seen from the east and as seen from the west. On the west and north sides the mountain ridges are to a larger extent "bald," or bare except as regards grassy vegetation, while on the east arboreal vegetation is more prevalent. This difference would appear to be due to the action of the south-east trade winds which, while making anchorage for shipping less secure on the east coast, carry with them copious supplies of moisture, and give rise to more luxuriant vegetation there. On the west coast of Santo numerous remarkably sharp ridges are seen rising abruptly

from the sea-line, and separated by deep valleys from the ranges further inland. No level ground is visible, and no streams of any size can be made out as we sail along, but bare rocks are not to be seen, except occasionally at the beach, grass covering the exposed parts of the ranges, while trees and shrubs fill the hollows. We sailed up this coast in fine bright weather, with none of the sultriness so general in these latitudes; and residents on this part of Santo state that the climate is markedly different from that of most other stations on the New Hebrides. This characteristic may be accounted for by the absence of the trade winds, from which the western side of this large island is sheltered; and the same explanation will hold good for Erromanga and others in the group. These regular south-easterly winds, by beating constantly on the coasts exposed to their influence, might be expected to cause extensive denudation of the rocks, washing away much of the softer coral, and so exposing the more resistant volcanic rocks which in the course of time provide a richer soil; this explains, together with the larger rainfall, the greater luxuriance of the vegetation on those coasts. On the east coast of Ancityum massive bluestone rocks are seen, while rounded boulders of the same composition are thickly strewn over the beach, and also in the beds of the rivers in the interior of the island. Between Port Nariven and Potnuma on the east of Erromanga, again, we saw beds of volcanic rock or lava on the beach, sloping gently to the sea, while the sand or gravel was blackish or dark grey, and there was no appearance of coral at the locality. The effects of denudation are visible at the south-west extremity of Aoba, as shewn by the presence of outlying masses of rock, sometimes mushroom-shaped.

On landing at the mouth of the Williams' River, which falls into the ocean at Dillon's Bay on the west coast of Erromanga, we observe ample evidence of the two forces that have contributed to the formation of this as of the other islands of the New Hebrides group. On the beach we see a number of great masses of coral rock several yards in diameter, lying isolated as if tossed there by some gigantic force, and hard and splintery as if silicified. At the same spot, the beach is formed almost exclusively of rounded pebbles and boulders almost all of volcanic origin, and showing the greatest variety in composition, grain and colour. Further up the valley in which the river flows, are seen boulders in profusion, and these, as well as the precipices of coral formation bordering the valley to a height of about 400 feet above the river bed, point to former volcanic disturbances of great violence. Although no active volcanoes exist on Erromanga, earthquakes are sometimes severe, as might be expected from the presence at no very great distance of the never-ceasing crater of Tanna to the south and, on the north, of the lofty cone of Lopevi, and the smoking peak on Ambrim, which are both subject to occasional outbursts. Evidence of recent volcanic action at Erromanga,

however, has been found at the south-east of the island, in an alteration of the depth of the sea between the shore at 'Traitors' Head and a small island off the coast, as ascertained by the officers of a surveying ship; and in agreement with the observation thus made, the natives there give an account of fire having once broken out at that spot.

Though the Williams' River is periodically converted into a rushing torrent after heavy rain, the sides of its narrow valley are so precipitous that the action of the stream itself can hardly have been the sole factor in its formation. To judge from the almost vertical precipices on its north side, it seems more likely that a rent caused by volcanic action opened a channel for the outflow of the waters from the higher levels of the tableland and the hills to the south, from which the river takes its origin. The greater part of the island consists of tableland, with a number of peaks situated mostly to the south of a line between Dillon's Bay on the west coast and the mountain, 'Traitors' Head, or Warantop of the natives, on the east. In crossing the island on that line, we found the tableland reached to nearly 1,000 feet above sea-level at the highest part traversed, while 'Traitors' Head, the highest peak on the island, was found by aneroid measurement to be about 2,750 feet above high-water mark.

It is a striking feature of the tableland that it is not exactly a flat plain, for though the path along which we walk is on the whole tolerably level, we pass numerous depressions of considerable area and depth, but quite different in their nature from valleys. The ground falls away rather abruptly from the higher levels into these hollows, which have flat bottoms but contain no water either running or stagnant, and there is no outlet, as in a valley, for any water that might collect in them. One of these depressions, situated near Mount Edwards on the north side of Dillon's Bay, shows a central pit of some length, and into it from the sides are projected a series of rounded ridges or embankments separated from one another by shallow gulleys, while the bottom of the hollow is convex without any sign of water. The mode of origin of these hollows is a matter for speculation, but they may be accounted for by the supposition that great rents had been caused by volcanic action, and afterwards partly filled by the falling in of the sides. The porous nature of the soil would explain the absence of still waters, and the paucity of lakes and swamps on most of the islands of the group may be similarly accounted for. Another phenomenon observed in a number of localities serves to indicate the destination of the water precipitated in the copious rainfall experienced on the islands, namely, the existence of springs of fresh water on the shores below high-water mark. Attention may be drawn to them by the sight of cows quenching their thirst on the sea-shore when the tide is out; and we may assume that the presence of these springs is not limited to that part of the shore between high and low water. At Havannah Harbour, in Efaté, a strongly running stream of pure water, at which the natives are

in the habit of doing their washing, is to be seen as we walk along the shores and, when followed up, is found to take its rise not many yards from the beach, where, from the bottom of a shallow basin under the shade of the trees, numerous streamlets accompanied with air-bells are seen rising to the surface, furnishing sufficient water to form a creek with a strong and copious flow to the shore. The uplands at Havannah Harbour, to the top of Mount Erskine, are dry, open and well-grassed, but the low-lying ground along the coast is always moist, and, according to Dr. Macdonald, malarious as well. Though the soil covering the coral rock at this spot is thin and scanty, the moisture present in it ensures a most luxuriant growth of vegetation.

On Erromanga the coral rocks are not so conspicuously shown as on some of the other islands of the group, where their mode of formation is displayed in a very striking manner in the shape of terraces rising one above and behind the other from the coast inland. Some show three distinct terraces, as on Hat Island at Havannah Harbour, and on an island in the Malo Pass between the islands of Malo and Santo, where they are extremely well defined, with a flat top about a third of the total length of the island. On Efaté, at Havannah Harbour, the land is composed of a succession of terraces, of which the peak known as Mount Erskine, or Bau-backo (shark's back) of the natives, is the narrowed remnant of the highest. The first terrace, crossed on the way inland from the harbour, presents a vertical face of over twenty feet on the seaward side and in the narrow pass or rift through which we make our way from the luxuriantly wooded coastal strip to an open grassy flat above. The next terrace is indicated by a prominence visible from the mission house, and known to the natives as Korea-menamasok, and found to be 820 feet above sea-level. As observed from a boat in the harbour, this point is seen to form the end of a prominent terrace extending towards the east, where it is nearly as high as the part seen as a peak. The third terrace is indicated, as already said, by Mount Erskine itself, which is hardly a well-defined mountain (though its small coral peak is about 1,230 feet above the sea), being only a little higher than the table-land, into which, towards the east, it slopes gradually and almost imperceptibly.

The same triple terrace formation is continued further round the island, and is well shown at Undine Bay on the north coast. Here, on walking up from the beach, after threading our way in a boat through the narrow and crooked passage over the coral reef, we first pass across a terrace of no great height, as at Havannah Harbour, then over one of greater height, on which is situated Arthursleigh, the residence of Mr Wardlaw, 600 feet above sea-level. The coffee plantations lie between this and the next terrace, above which, to the tops of the hills, coral rocks are met with, though some of the hills, and those the highest, are covered with forest

vegetation to their summits. On the dome-shaped peak to which the ridge above Arthursleigh leads, while volcanic boulders are not absent, rocks of coral formation are to be seen, weathered into thin, vertical slabs that give out a resonant, metallic sound when kicked or struck with any hard substance. The coral rocks, both here on Efate and at Dillon's Bay in Erromanga, have a hard and splintery or almost flint-like character, acquired probably through the action of volcanic heat. On the path across Erromanga, near Dillon's Bay, the ground was seen to be strewn with angular fragments of calcareous rock, and the soil at this part was dark in colour. Pieces of pure white stone were picked up, showing on the fractured surface concentric lines as seen in Scotch pebble. Other pieces were white, hard and crystalline, and evidently fossiliferous—a white marble. Another variety, in the form of a large fragment projecting above the surface of the ground, gave a ringing sound when struck, and its fracture was yellowish and crystalline. In the bed of the creek first crossed were many large volcanic boulders of dark blue colour, and the soil in the neighbourhood was observed to be red, while the grass was long and luxuriant as compared with that nearer Dillon's Bay.

To the question, What is the age of the islands of the New Hebrides? it will be safe to reply that, in a geological sense, they are of quite recent formation. Some, indeed, are at the present time in the throes of active evolution through the action of live volcanoes. The formation of the coral reefs under the surface of the ocean by the growth of the living polypes goes on very slowly and gradually through long periods of time; but the disruption of the calcareous reefs formed by them may take place both rapidly and suddenly. The reefs, which are sometimes of enormous thickness, are broken up and elevated far above the surface of the ocean, or sunk below their former level; but all the while the formation of new coral by the living polypes goes on at those depths below the surface of the ocean suited to their life and continued development. But besides breaking up and dislocating the existing rocks, the volcanoes add to the bulk of the islands by the emission of streams of lava and the ejection of boulders, ashes, etc., which form thick masses overlying or intermixed with the coral. By volcanic agency the configuration and size of the islands may be rapidly altered, or a gradual and slow elevation or depression of the surface of the land may take place, although the additions to the mass of the coral formation may be extremely slow and imperceptible.

As already mentioned, evidence of changes due to volcanic action within the memory of those now living have been detected on the east coast of Erromanga, and it is not so long ago that at Port Resolution, near the active volcano on the east coast of Tanna, an earthquake occurred causing the upheaval of the sea-bottom on its northern side, while another portion of land near it sank below the level of the sea. The Tanna volcano is remarkable for the frequency and regularity of its outbursts one taking

place every two or three minutes. The most obvious explanation of this characteristic is that the immediate cause of the explosions is the inflow of water into the molten interior of the volcano, resulting in the generation and escape of a large volume of steam; and if the belief is well-founded that the lake in the vicinity is in communication with the cavity of the volcano, the explanation will be all the more feasible. Masses of solid material are seen to be ejected from the crater at each explosion, and dust is deposited at We-a-si-si further north, injuring the crops of the native teachers there, according to the Rev. Mr. Watt. That this volcanic dust may be carried much further has been proved in your own experience by the fall at Dillon's Bay on the night of 3rd June, 1898, of a fine brown dust from the Tanna volcano, a distance of fifty miles, penetrating into every corner of your house during the four hours it continued to fall. A strong south wind would be a necessary condition of this occurrence, without precedent as it has been during your twenty-six years' residence on the island; but, as you have remarked, that condition has been present on numerous occasions without it being associated with a shower of dust derived from the volcano. The phenomenon doubtless indicates some unusual form of combustion in the bowels of the volcano, giving rise to a lighter and more copious ash than usual. The continuous activity of the Tanna volcano must result in constant changes in its own constitution, though not generally of such importance as to materially alter its external appearance.

The other active volcanoes of the group, if less regular and continuous in their outbursts than that of Tanna, are more violent and destructive when their occasional eruptions take place, lava flowing down their sides into the valleys below, and scorize covering and destroying the vegetation all around, while human lives are placed in great jeopardy. Such an eruption took place a few years ago on Ambrim, and again on the same island within the last few months; while still more recently the lofty and steep cone of Lopevi has been in violent action, placing the inhabitants, as at Ambrim, in the greatest danger. Still later, at the end of the month of May, 1898, an eruption from the sea-bottom took place on the north-east side of Tongoa, and was witnessed and reported by credible European residents. Every eight, ten, or twelve minutes an upheaval of muddy water to a height of ten to thirty feet occurred, and stones were thrown up to a greater height, while the noises preceding the outburst were similar to those heard before an earthquake, though no terrestrial disturbance was in this case perceived. In the Banks' group, lying to the north of the New Hebrides, evidences of volcanic formation are apparent. In Ureparapara is a bay showing the island to be formed evidently of an extinct crater, one side having been removed leaving it open to the ocean, while at Vanua Lava, Port Patteson, the best harbour in the group, may from its appearance have been a volcanic crater. On

one of the hills surrounding this harbour white sulphurous vapour is observed escaping from a rent in the ground, while the river taking its rise from that part is generally found to contain sulphur in its waters, which are said to be warm, though on our visit to it, after heavy rain, its presence could not be detected. Sulphur in crystals is found here, as also in connection with the volcano on Tanna.

The presence of granite on the islands is doubtful, although on Santo its existence is more likely on account of its greater area. At Anamé, on the north side of Ancityum a mile or so from the coast, is a very large block of stone usually spoken of as granite, and resembling that rock, but probably only granitoid and of volcanic origin. Its surface is blackened by exposure, and, on the sloping south or shady side, is speckled over with a small whitish lichen. The front surface, which is more nearly vertical, faces due north, is eleven paces in length, and is engraved with a large number of curious figures. It is said that the natives have no knowledge or tradition regarding the origin of these carvings, except that they were there when their forefathers came to the island, about 600 years ago, as some think. The flat top, nearly seven feet at its widest, is also engraved, and there are a few figures too on the south side.

While sailing round the islands of the New Hebrides, a good opportunity is found to study the coast flora, the frequent stoppages of the missionary or trading vessel being favourable for this purpose, though not as a rule permitting lengthy excursions inland. There is a great sameness of coastal vegetation on all the islands of the Pacific, the plants composing it being to a large extent common to all, though the flora of the interior of one island may differ to an important degree from that of others. In this sameness the eastern coast of Australia to some extent participates, in as far as it lies within the Tropics, is washed by the waters of the Pacific Ocean, and is subject to the influence of the trade winds. Hence it is that those who are familiar with the Queensland coast, when they travel round the New Hebrides, or other groups of islands, are always meeting with well-known plants reminding them of Australia. The agencies by which this similarity has been brought about are in themselves an interesting study and are various in kind, including the transport of fruits and seeds across the intervening areas of salt water by the waves and currents, on the feet or in the stomachs of birds, and by human intervention in various ways. So far, therefore, as the coast flora of the New Hebrides is concerned, it does not differ materially from that of other islands, such as the Fiji or Samoan groups, or, as regards part of the flora at least, from the north-east coast of Australia. With the flora of the interior of the islands, on the other hand, the case may be entirely different; that is to say, instead of the central areas of the various islands being inhabited by the same species of plants, one



may be tenanted by species quite distinct from those of another island, and in that case some of the plants may even be endemic, or existing on that island alone and nowhere else. Whether this characteristic exists on any of the islands of the New Hebrides group has not yet been fully tested, but a preliminary examination of specimens collected during the winter of 1896 on Erromanga, Aneityum, and Efate, inclines us to the belief that, on these islands at least, the majority of the plants are of similar if not identical species with those of other groups in the Pacific Ocean and of the eastern coast of Australia. This conclusion may, however, not apply to all the islands of the New Hebrides, especially to Santo, which from its size is more likely to present a greater variety of plants, and perhaps even endemic forms of vegetable life.

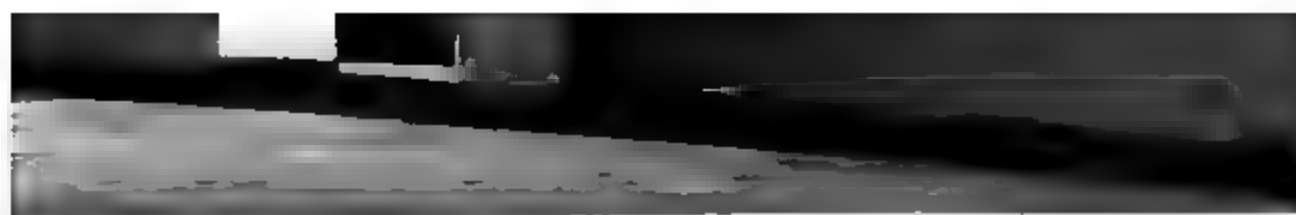
The vegetation of the South Sea Islands is so prolific as to come down to high-water mark on the shores, and the pebbly beach, just beyond the reach of the waves, is frequently carpeted with white and purple-flowered creepers, convolvuluses and pea-blossoms, while trees and shrubs, many of them handsome in flowers and foliage, overhang the shingle. The mangroves may sometimes be seen as a continuous line of shrubs fringing the coast line, sending their roots down into the sea-water, and indicating the height to which the tide rises by the lower border of their foliage, which is as straight as if clipped, being arrested in its growth at that level. The glossy foliage of these trees, and in some cases their shapely forms, together with the curious adaptations of their flowers and roots to the conditions prevailing on a muddy shore, make them an interesting study. Close to the beach also the trees may be seen festooned with the twining stems of a convolvulus of robust growth and bearing large trumpet-shaped flowers of a pure white colour. At or near to the beach are fine trees of the genera *Tournefortia*, *Hernandia*, *Terminalia*, *Gyrocarpus* and *Calophyllum*. The last-named is known as the Tamanon, that supplies large logs of timber of superior quality; and mention may be made of the *Casuarina*, or "she-oak" of Australians, as frequently seen growing to a considerable height quite close to the water.

The lower hills near the coast are generally sparsely clothed with vegetation, and this character is still more marked on the tablelands, where the landscape is open and breezy, reminding us of Australia, and in striking contrast with the close, densely wooded valleys and moor of the higher hills. In all probability residence there would be free from the poison of malaria. The trees are few, and the presence of an acacia, frequently met with on the tableland as well as near the coast, enhances the resemblance. This tree was seen forty feet high on the Erromangan tableland, and is known to the natives there as the Mori; while on Aneityum it bears the name Inneri, and on Efate Numeri. It yields small logs and stakes of great hardness and durability, and it is of this wood that the Erromangans make their beautifully finished bows. Shrubs,

many of them very ornamental, bracken (*Gleichenia*) and orchids relieve the comparative bareness of these localities; but it is very seldom indeed that we meet with any earth or rock actually bare.

It is in the valleys, however, where a deeper soil and more copious moisture exist, that we find the most luxuriant growth of trees and shrubs, although on the higher hills the vegetation, if less rank, is perhaps equally varied and interesting. The largest trees are seen in the former situation, and as we ascend the mountains, which are usually wooded to the top, they become less lofty, and on the peaks—between 2,000 and 3,000 feet above the sea—they are on an average only about fifteen feet in height. At 1,500 feet and upwards we find a wealth of mosses and lichens, luxuriating in such a copious moisture as would seem to indicate a greater or more constant rainfall than occurs on the coast. These lower forms of vegetable life grow on the living or fallen trunks more than on the ground, clothing and festooning them in a fresh and bright drapery, not green alone, for the lichens show enough colour to greatly enhance the beauty of the scene. It is on the trees on the hillsides also that we find the greater number of the orchids indigenous to the islands. Of these interesting plants between twenty and thirty species were collected, in flower or in seed, and a considerable number of other kinds were seen out of flower. If the New Hebridean species are less gorgeous than those of some other countries nearer the Equator, they are nevertheless objects of great interest, owing to their beautifully coloured, wax-like flowers, and the singular shapes assumed by flowers and foliage alike.

In a walk across Erromanga, such as I had the pleasure of taking under your guidance in the latter half of July, 1896, we were able to note all the different phases of the vegetation according to soil, moisture, exposure and height above sea-level. Starting from the mouth of the Williams' River at Dillon's Bay, we first walk for some distance up the valley, making our acquaintance with the dense foliage of tropical type, under the close shade of which luxuriate ferns, selaginellas and creepers, with scattered plantations of cocoanut palms, bananas, bread-fruit and orange trees laden with ripe fruit, and passing the natives busy with their yearly labour of arrowroot-making—their voluntary offering towards the support of the mission to which they have loyally attached themselves. Then ascending a steep, winding path, first used by the early sandalwood traders, and since their time improved by your own exertions and continued right across the island, we escape the necessity for wading laboriously through the coarse cane-grass or tangle of creepers seen to right and left of us. After a stiff pull we reach a level higher than the great precipices seen from the valley, and shortly we are on the tableland, following a path in a general sense level, and avoiding the deep hollows now and then passed on the one side or on the other, but necessarily dipping down to the lower level of the streams, of which a number have



to be crossed on our way. Few trees are seen, and these are mostly the Mori, till the latter half of the journey is entered upon. Then we observe that the hollows and the valleys traversed by the creeks, unlike those on the western half of the path, are filled with trees and shrubs, although our path along the higher parts continues still open and grassy. At length the line of march takes us into densely wooded country, and although the ascents and descents in crossing the valleys, in which streams of considerable size now run, are much steeper and more arduous, the vegetation presents a tropical aspect all through, and is more varied as well as more extensive in area than that of the narrow valley of the Williams' River. While the road, through nearly its whole length, might be passed by a vehicle, there are portions of it towards the eastern side of the island that would make an ideal carriage drive, arched over and shaded by tall trees with handsome foliage, and decorated here and there with palms, dracaenas, climbers and other ornamental plants. The same closely wooded character is continued to the village of Arawau, where we stayed for the night, and from there down the slopes to the coast at Port Nariven, where the mission house stands close to the spot where Captain Cook landed when he first discovered the island. 'Traitors' Head, or Warantop of the natives, the high, three-peaked mountain near this spot, was ascended by us on a fine, cool day, and like most of the other high mountains is so densely wooded from base to summit as to allow few chances of a view of the surrounding land and ocean, without our climbing to the top of a tree for that purpose.

Among the many interesting plants met with during this walk across Erromanga, special mention may be made of a myrtaceous shrub found in full flower on the tableland to the east of Dillon's Bay and also on Traitors' Head. It is the Nimram of the natives and a species of *Metrosideros*, bearing large trusses of bright red flowers, though a yellow-flowered variety was found on the ranges near Mount Gordon to the south of the bay, and also at Undine Bay, Efaté. This shrub was under ten feet in height on the tableland and on the slopes of Traitors' Head, as well as on the peak to the south of Mount Gordon, ascended by us later on; but on these two hills, close to their summits, we found it also as a robust tree, at the last named locality about fifty feet high, the trunk, buttressed with projecting ridges, measuring fifteen feet in circumference at five feet from the ground. On Traitor's Head the largest specimen seen was noted as four feet in diameter at four feet above the surface, branching into limbs of a diameter of two feet and a half downwards; and this exceptional growth was associated in each locality with an abundance of the same plant as a moderate-sized shrub.

On the tableland, also, we saw a shrub of some culinary interest, growing plentifully there, but just passing out of its fruit-bearing stage. This is a species of *Vaccinium*, or blueberry, the fruit of which in your own

experience has been found a passable substitute for the blueberry of Canada in the making of jam and tarta. A ground orchid with fleshy roots and a long raceme of pale, pinkish flowers was found on the plateau, resembling *Dipodium punctatum* of Australia, and evidently closely allied to that species. At the foot of trees in the damp woods a peculiar, pale, fungus-like plant was met with, a species of *Balanophora*, evidently parasitic, on the roots of the trees. Near the summit of Traitors' Head a small tree belonging to the family *Goodeniaceae* was found, with handsome foliage and large flowers of a lavender colour. When on a visit to Cook's Bay during our stay at Port Nariven, the native women accompanying us brought in the branches and cones of a striking plant belonging to the *Ginger* family. This proved to be *Tapeinochilus pungens*, previously recorded only from one or two places in the Malay Archipelago and the Pacific coast of Northern Queensland. Though showing some differences from those obtained at the latter locality, these were not of such importance as to constitute the Erromangan plant a distinct species. Another plant, previously thought to be endemic in Queensland and New South Wales, was also found on Erromanga, namely, *Castanospermum australe*, the Moreton Bay chestnut, or *Ovooleungkil* of the Erromangans; but a similar plant appears also to grow in New Caledonia. *Entada scandens*, the Match-box bean of Queensland, is also common on the island, the long pods hanging overhead on "Robertson's Road" and in other localities.

Brief references may now be made to some of the families of plants prevailing in the vegetation of the islands of the New Hebrides, and to individual forms presenting features of more than usual interest. The large and important order of the *Leguminosae* is well represented, as by *Canavalia obtusifolia*, the creeper on the sea-shores already mentioned; *Abrus precatorius*, a climber, of which the scarlet and black seeds are well known as Paternoster beans; *Erythrina*, a tree singular in having deciduous leaves, unlike the great majority of tropical plants, and flowering before the young leaves make their appearance; species also of *Crotalaria*, *Tephrosia*, *Castanospermum*, *Entada*, etc. The genera *Caesalpinia* and *Acacia* are also represented, as well as one or more genera allied to the latter. The *Rutaceae* include a number of species, most of which are found in Australia, including apparently two thought to be exclusively Australian; and a species of wild orange belongs to this order. The *Malvaceae* are common, including *Hibiscus*, of which six or eight species were met with. One of these, *Hibiscus tiliacens*, is well known as supplying the natives with supports for the roofs and doorways of their dwellings. This shrub or tree, as it grows on the banks of the streams, sends its branches out in a gentle curve so as to overhang the water, and when two of these are set up opposite one another a Gothic arch is formed, so that the entrances of the native huts appear as if copied from a Euro-

pean model, though they were doubtless so formed long before the Gothic style of architecture took its rise. In the order *Sterculiaceæ* are *Heritiera littoralis*, a coastal tree with large angular nuts, and *Commerçonis echinata*, a small tree with pleasing foliage and flowers, both also Australian. Of the *Sapindaceæ* a number of shrubs or trees were found, including a very ornamental one, apparently that named *Lepiderema*, belonging to New Guinea. *Dodonæa viscosa* is common on the islands, as it is in most other parts of the world, and *Cardiospermum Halicacabum*, a pretty twiner, has also a very wide distribution. Only one representative of the *Rosaceæ* was seen, a species of *Rubus* or bramble, on the summit of Traitors' Head. The Saxifrage order, well known in the old country from the pretty herbaceous plants it contains, is represented by trees of the genera *Geissia* and *Spiræanthemum*.

The *Myrtaceæ*, so numerous in Australia, include two species of *Acicalyptus*, much resembling *Eucalyptus*, found on the hills of Aneityum; and three species of *Eugenia* were also got on that island, and another on Erromanga. *Melastoma malabathricum*, a pretty shrub with ribbed leaves and large flowers, grows plentifully at Anelcahat on Aneityum, where the flowers are always white, and two others belonging to the same order, the *Melastomaceæ*, were obtained, one on the hills there and the other on Erromanga, though past flowering. Of the *Loranthaceæ*, or Mistletoe family, a species of *Loranthus*, was obtained on Aneityum and Erromanga, and a small species of *Viscum* on the mountains to the south of Dillon's Bay. The *Rubiaceæ* are very numerous on the islands, and include some shrubs with fine foliage, while the large orders, *Compositæ* and *Umbelliferae*, are poorly illustrated. Belonging to the *Rubiaceæ* was found a peculiar plant of the kind named *Myrmecophilus*, in reference to the function these exercise in harbouring ants. It grows as an epiphyte on the trees at the summits of the hill at Undine Bay, Efaté, and has a remarkable swollen or "gouty" stem, from which roots pass into the bark and ramify there, while from the upper side the branches spring bearing the leaves and inconspicuous flowers. The tuberous stem is irregularly rounded or lobed, and is not unlike an enlarged potato in appearance, smooth and brownish on the surface, and growing to larger than a man's head in size. A number of apertures, however, are seen on its surface, the openings of tunnels that traverse the interior of the growth. In these passages were found ants of two sizes, but very small, and it is the presence of these insects in such plants that has led to their being spoken of as *Myrmecophilus*. In some plants of this description the ants are large and fierce and, in return for the lodging their host-plant gives them, they do it a good turn by keeping off insects or other animals that might otherwise be injurious to it. In this case the puny ants could hardly be of much service as defenders of their host; but, at the same time, it may be said

that insects, if we except spiders, appear to be few on the islands, at least in winter, the season in which our visit was made.

*Plumbago zeylanica* is frequently seen, and the bark of its roots supply the place of mustard as an external application, while in other countries the plant is used medicinally in other ways. Of the *Asclepiadeæ*, a species of *Hoya*, or wax-plant, was found on the rocks at the east coast of Aneityum, and it was from specimens obtained on the east coast of Tanna that Robert Brown first described and named the species *Hoya australis*. Examples of the genera *Solanum*, *Cyrtandra*, *Ruellia*, *Eranthemum*, *Coleus*, *Tournefortia*, *Vitex*, *Premna*, *Stephania*, and others were also obtained on the different islands visited during our trip. The *Euphorbiaceæ* of the New Hebrides include a considerable variety of forms, from the *Euphorbia pilulifera*, a common weed at some parts, and used medicinally on the islands as well as in Australia, to the large and ornamental plants of the genera *Macaranga*, *Acalypha*, *Breynia*, *Codiaeum* and others. The last-named is usually spoken of as *Croton*, and is remarkable for the great variety and singular forms of its leaves, as well as for the rich colours displayed in them, as may be seen in a collection of growing plants at the mission house on Erakor at Efâté. The order *Urticaceæ* includes the Fig family as a sub-order, represented by the majestic Banyan and other species of *Ficus*, of which one at least—as seen at the Dillon's Bay mission house, to which it had been imported from Tanna—supplies abundance of excellent fruit of a rich purple colour. The order includes also species of *Elatostema*, *Trema*, *Pipturus*, besides some more lowly, nettle-like plants. Belonging to the *Piperaceæ* is the well-known Kava plant, *Piper methysticum*, a native of the islands, but not readily discovered by the botanical collector on account of kava-drinking being tabooed as a hurtful form of indulgence. The liquor is obtained by the fermentation of the juices of the root of the plant, and its use as a drink produces a pleasing though not inebriating effect on the brain and nerves, but in excessive quantities a temporary paralysis of the lower extremities. Though I did not hear of any lasting injurious effects on the natives from the habitual or excessive use of kava, it would not be right to assume that indulgence to excess in a drink having immediate effects of so marked a character, may not be followed by more remote permanent results, although these may be minimised by the active out-of-door life of the unconverted savage. Another species of plant, called false kava, *Piper subpeltatum*, is common in shady woods, and is very like the true kava in general appearance, though lacking the peculiar property of the latter.

The *Santalaceæ* or sandalwood family are represented by more than one species of *Santalum*, "false" as well as "true" sandalwood; but although the trees were formerly plentiful, the trade in that valuable wood was so ruthlessly carried on, especially on Erromanga, before the establishment of the missions, that it is seldom that a growing tree is

met with now. *Dammara obtusa*, a species of Kauri, in the order *Coniferae* is so plentiful on Aneityum that a sawmill to work it was a considerable number of years ago established at Anelcauhat, though latterly the trade in the timber does not appear to have prospered. The specimen found by you on Erromanga quite recently proves its existence on that island also, where it is known to the natives as Nendū. The tree found was, according to your notes, "probably forty feet high and not more than eight feet in circumference, as it was close to the sea-shore and in a very dry spot abounding with blue whinstones thrown up by the sea"; but as you say that this particular tree was planted by a woman known to the present natives, I am in doubt as to whether it is the only tree on the island. Kauri is said also to grow on Santo, but it is not unlikely that the species found there, being so much further north, is different from that of the southern islands of the group. Young trees of *Podocarpus cupressina*, another conifer, were seen on Aneityum, and in the Melbourne Herbarium is a specimen of an *Araucaria* that had been sent to the late Baron von Mueller by Captain Fraser, who had obtained it on one of the New Hebrides Islands. Mention may also be made of the *Cycas* or so-called Sago-palm, of the arrowroot plant, *Tacca pinnatifida*, and also of a very singular plant, *Sciaphila* of the order *Triaridaceae*, found on the summit of the hills at Undine Bay, Efaté.

Among the orders of Monocotyledonous plants, the *Orchideae*, already spoken of, are probably the most interesting and attractive to the lovers of flowers. From their number and variety they form an important constituent of the flora of the New Hebrides, and while all are interesting there are among them not a few that would please the most fastidious taste. As a foliage plant, a species of *Anocetochilus*, with velvety leaves of a rich deep green veined with silver, common on the hills of Aneityum, could not be surpassed. The *Liliaceae* do not appear to be plentiful, but the species of *Cordyline* or *Dracæna* are interesting as foliage or scenic plants, while a species of *Dianella* reminds us of similar ones in Southern Australia. The *Pandanaceae* are represented by the *Pandanus* or screw-pines, large plants of striking appearance, with aerial roots and massive globular fruits, and the climbing *Freycinetia*, which at the time of our visit was frequently seen, but only in flower on the summit of Traitors' Head. The *Palmae* surpass all these, however, in stateliness and elegance, the cocoanut palm being cultivated everywhere for the copra or dried kernel of its nuts, and with other species enhancing the beauty of the landscape in all situations.

Cryptogamic plants are abundant on the islands, the humid climate everywhere prevailing being favourable to their growth and propagation. The *Fernae* are very numerous, and particularly so on the southern side of Aneityum, on the hills and up the valley of the River Inweilikei, where the climate appears to be wetter than ordinary; and a great variety

of interesting forms may be procured, from the tiny filmy sorts to the tall and graceful tree ferns. Specimens may be found of the genera *Schizæa*, *Lygodium*, *Todea*, *Trichomanes*, *Vittaria*, *Davallia*, *Pteris*, *Cheilanthes*, *Acrostichum*, *Angiopteris*, *Antrophyum*, *Adiantum*, *Asplenium*, *Polypodium* and others, some represented by a number of species. The *Lycopodiaceæ* found include two species of *Lycopodium*, *Pailotum* hanging from the trunks of trees, *Tmesipteris tannensis*, so named from having been first found on Tanna, and a *Selagenilla* as plentiful as bracken in the shady woods. *Musci* and *Hepaticæ* are plentiful; and the same may be said of *Fungi*, especially of the *Polyporus* family. The presence of the order *Equisetaceæ*, or Horse-tails, on the islands is of special interest to Australians, from the remarkable fact of their entire absence from Australia. A species of *Equisetum* grows luxuriantly in the beds of the creeks near the coast on Aneityum; and it is strange that while so many of the indigenous plants on these islands are common to them and the eastern coast of Australia, no representative of this particular family should ever yet have been found on our island continent.

## 2. THE LORD'S PRAYER

### *In Several Languages of the New Hebrides Group of Islands.*

#### ANEITYUM.

Ak Etmama an nohatag, Etmu itap nidam. Etmu yetpam nelcau unyum. Uhmū imiaiji intas unyum an nobohtan, et idivaig an nohotag. Alaama aiek nitai caig incama an nadiat inig. Um jim aru tah nedo has unyima aiek, et idivaig ecra eti aru tah nedo has u atimi vai cama aijama. Um jim atau irama an nedo oop aiek, jam imiatamaig cama va niji itai has. Et idim unyum aiek nelcau, im nemda, im natimi alupas ;rai iji mesese. Emen.

#### FUTUNA.

Tamanomea i rāgi, katapu tiou eigoa. Ahmai tiou avaka tagata. Kapena tiou akaniani i takere nei feipe i rāgi. Tufa akimea iranci anea kai ehtaurufie iei. Koina tanori i apenanesa omea feipe akimea kohkoina tanori ma fakau nopenanesa iakimea. Koina tiarafia kimea ki akauliginea norehresia kimea. Kaie kaumata kina kimea i asa. Niou tavaka tagata, ma tatamotua, ma tiatata, inapugi manapugi. Emen.

#### TANNA.—(*Kwamera and Port Resolution Districts.*)

Rememaha ya neai, na' gam ikinan, pa entata seim ruvehe, pa havahi nokwam ya tuprana roai ya neai, tik aveipehe navegenien sanemaha ipet,



tik apa narupunien tafaga reraha sakemaha rosi kemaha yahapuk arapun u'ma tafaga reraha nermama hamo ya kemaha, tik apa niripenien kemaha te nefeifeien, mavahiraka kemaha te nerahaien, seim entata, neackaiien mene, namasanien ya narimnarime pam mene ya nuk nukeme. Amen.

**TANHA.—(Lenakel District.)**

Remimar le neai, Netigam terausim, Neremerean Taham terna, Nakci-keian Taham terol moma le neai ne le ten. Ofa towe nar tiakarkin towe. Mosita netetan temar an imarosita netetan te ierem ramomukin kamar. Tenesiran kamar to nosenofenan, mero oemih kamar to ieremitat. Mero Neremerean Taham an nesanenan an netig asul le noanu min. Amen.

**ANIWA.**

Tamanomi taragi, Teigo tapu. Tshou tavaka komy. Tshou afasao erefia acre infanua wararoni fakarogona hepe i taragi. Tufwa acime franci tshome akai o nopogi ma nopogi. Touwaki nori maganisa tshome, hepe acime touwaki nori o maganisa o tagata iacime. Natshicina arafia acime ia teretu o maganisa, kaia kapare acime ia ane ia iotahi; ma tahou tavaka, ma tomatua, ma nokabisa, tau ma tau. Emen.

**ERROMANGA.**

Itemen e kam ūnpokop, eti tumpora nin sorum. Elum lō sorum. Eti numpi tarti sū sorum ra nemap sugkū ūnpokop. Ovug kam irē nevag nisekomam. Mefiellintug kam sat sū soremam, sugkū ka kem lafiellinto-konda mori umnumpi sat iramam. Metūtōro kam ran tapmi kō eforwug kam marugi sat sū, It lō Im horog, Im nilasilaswi sorum, ūvum nevi su Indowi. Amen.

**EPATÉ.**

Temagami O uane ku toko elagi, Nagiema iga tab. Namerameian anago iga mai. Ruga bati te uane ku mesau na emeromina, bakauli uan ru toko bat ia elagi. Ba tua gami nafiinaga nag i uia ki gami maisa ua naga. Go ba manigami rati lu nafolofolon sa anigami ban, i taosi uan kinami au mer magi tea folofolo sa ki gami rati lu nigara ban. Go ba ti belaki gami baki nasurusuruen mau, me ba fulua gami ki te uane i sa. Anago namerameran, go nakasuan, go nasemanien, i tu tu bo tu mautu. Amen.

**NGUNA.**

Mamaginami, waina ku doko nakoroatelagi doko. Nagisafina ega tapu Namaraktana anigo ega umai. Namasauana anigo ega vei tea mariana maramana, ega tapala waina e pei tea mariana nakoroatelagi. Pa tua

gami masoso navinaga seara waina e pia ki gami. Go pa maginami midoakikorokoro naleo maga waina e one gami one egatapala waina kinami ma au po magi tea maga waina naleo aginami e one ara one, au po madeada midoakikorokoro e. Go pa ta piragi gami paki nalawo surueana mau, ma pa vua lua gami ki tea sa. Nalakena anigo namarakiana, go nakasuzana, go nasamasamana, pa pa ega tu po du mau du. Amen.

TONGOA (*South*),

*And the neighbouring small islands of Tongariki, Makur, Mataso, etc.*

Popo aniceme arae ko doko na rikitilagi doko, na kihaxa qa taka tam'. Na marakeane xaine qa arah'; na masauneane xaine ru woh' varamane qa hiniki ri noko qoh' na rikitilagi: ko ori iceme mesa na vinaga arae i hiniki na qog'. Ne ko miniceme betog' elu na le abane arae i doko iceme i doko qa hiniki arae keiceme xo miniare abane na le aniceme i doko inire i doko, xo miniare betog' elu. Ne te ko qa wat' iceme do na meridogieane, ne ko kaolu iceme taka taha. Amen.

EPI.—(*Nikaura District.*)

Arimamemi rage pa teke e peni, kiauffiki e ki wa. Kiauffia raurarena imi. Naonenoniena kiuma a taŋa yemarava, e alpa rage pa a taŋa mava epeni. O la ani memi ŋani nakinaniena kamemi. A o la lua piowata kiamemi e alpa rage pa memi me pure lua piowata rage pa eririna lala toŋena a utaŋa ani memi. O pe ure memi pene nakokaniena ana o ure lua memi me pa tani na piowa. Amen.

MALEKULA.—(*Aulus District.*)

Tita tahamintil, u tok re nemav mor. Nahsem ti bambui. Batih venua tahegko ti pene. U mucia nesah aho u ndamuceni re nevenua efetil, lahasi re nemav mor. U leve sak amintil abakal nahamintil mil gcan ia abakal. U rumbasi tuacani nesah umui tahamintil lahasi mil rumbasi tuacani nesah umui ta asamagk ho ara mucia nesah umui abane amintil. U metohsi amintil mil se mucia nesah umui, u leve gculi amintil entene amuko umui. Batih venua tahegko, Egko u mucia meserakan ia. Egko u mesilimbar, bu vagi tui. Amen.

MALEKULA.—(*Pangkumu District.*)

Ta sa nemdi mo tok ra namarin. Nacia sam bi kon. Batin venu sam bi vine. Bo uase macoran sam ra fenu tin apan fere ra namarin macat. Bu rev i bi jici nemdi ramuge Natinca nemdi daba hani ramuge. Bu rev i tocini nier mi jij sa nemdi, fere nemdi dama rev i tocini nier mi jij sa haria ra uase nier mi jij hini nemdi. Bo jege nemdi dama se uase

re jitic mi jij, bu revi gcure nemdi reni jitic mi jij. Ca batin venu hisam  
ca hau mo pas rukure, ca hau mo fanfanare vec aig tue. Amen.

MALEKULA.—(*Uripiv.*)

Tata se kem, ku lik rege melerin. Nisem on. Batun vanu som pi  
vini. Kupu loli kem ga nama lik gatan, namba loli nanu ga nik ku  
marog, pi repi kami kama loli rege melerin mari. Kup elai nanin tevi  
kem leligan, namb ani. Kup etelasi tueni nanu ga mi sij kem nama loli,  
pi repi kem nama telasi tueni nanu ga mi sij ga mara loli. Kup ejigi  
kem sete namba loli nanu ga mi sij. Kup ereve tueni kem sete namba  
loli nanu ga mi sij. Batun vanu som. Nanu ga mo su gok nanu som.  
Pu to tui gok vini. Amen.

MALEKULA.—(*South West Bay.*)

Timinoa anagcite, nanotok lameligk. Niciana nunk velawaw, Nemu-  
cut tivi vetla anagcite. Inden kohoga tagen tabiah, man iah inden  
kohoga tagen lameligk. Kubilip naaien tigkisah bita kite kisah. Tiah  
nohobo pelowas nesamp spelovei kite, sesam kuspelovei mucut tiah nohobo  
pelowas ahankite kupsu wahvei nohobo nabiah pelowas. Kulibuagcite  
tel nohobo pelowas : kuvi betla nagatiga kili dagcalen kubiah gin retewaw  
tue sahasah. Amen.

AMBRIM.

Timianem, co om ru orcomeri. Ham i bokon. O me lia viri tave.  
O hahara vantin tave ralia drolom ran tan mewini ge co ramru orcomeri.  
O higani mile meni cenem lonle biali ran wobug tave. O herocro cenem  
hanem sisi mehakabe mewini maherocro vantin sinan ha sisi mehakabe  
meni cenem. Sincha on halin cenem vani ot ne halcoro. O halku  
cenem nani co tolou. Tiban, sisi tave ham ; om yah ; om mutin ; om ru  
mato mato. Amen.

MALO.

Tamamam a na tukailagi Aulu ; isam tabu ; ava nom tamata a mai ;  
ava kamam ka rogouosai nom sorai a tano, a socen mede a na tukailagi  
Aulu. O sile te camam cinau barede. O lai tacai cinasate tele kamam,  
a socen kamam ka lai tacai cinasate tele tamaloci tenabu. O coro kamam  
ka te loli cinasate, o metaci kamam ka ducu. Verama nom, cinasuica  
nom, cinauosai nom, tauntari, tauntari. Amen.

SANTO.—(*Tangoa.*)

Tamamam na tuga, kitsam i tabu ; nom tamata i nai ; i la thaii nanasalo  
nom na verama iseiso, sokena, la le thaii na tuga. O sile kanam te kamam

## APPENDIX

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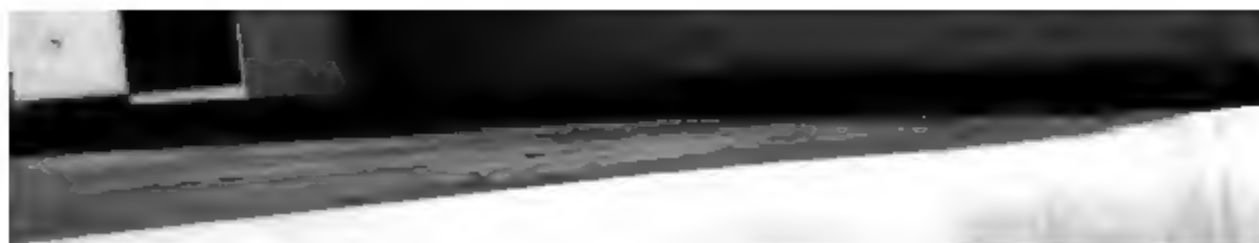
nao nokoriki. O supu komo kanam na nonam gina satl, sokena, kana supu komo na tamloci, la thatha gina kanam me sati, nora ginao. O supu rebe kanam than isara la guruguru kanam tsea. O la nareki kanam isana me sesati. Ko suika tsea, Ko ruku tsea, nom tamata i toko tauni i tari. Amen.

### SANTO.—(*Nogugn.*)

Temamam ta totok me ne tolon, mwertae kisem merua. Mwertae ro nom sae simae. Mwertae ro toua me ne lepa ao sokoi ni taroia, sokon ro toua me ne tolon. Ko lapi emam sinaka sopsopwea. Mo ko veti melum suri rire te ao nakavera mei emam. Ko korkoro emam me ne warei kin nakavera, mo korkoro emam me ne nakavera. Suri niko Moli mo maronim ae, mo oom ae, va van roprop. Amen.







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